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National Restaurant Association — Vol. 5 ☐ No. 5 ☐ May 1985

NRA NEWS

SPECIAL PULL-OUT SEMINAR SCHEDULE

MN
JEANNE LONG 05/06 MEMBER#81J011WF
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION
SERVICES INC
4520 EAST-WEST HWY
WASHINGTON DC 20

OPERATION: PROM/GRADUATION

Restaurateurs Create Safe Celebrations

NRA MEETINGS

Seminars

Basic Foodservice Courses

Basic Supervision in Foodservice
6/11 Orlando, FL
6/26 Seattle, WA
7/17 Memphis, TN
8/5 Portland, OR

Dining Room Management
6/17 Annapolis, MD
6/19 Jackson, MS
7/9 Irvine, CA
7/30 Atlanta, GA

Increasing Foodservice Productivity
6/18 Westchester, NY

Kitchen Management
6/10 Orlando, FL
6/19 Hartford, CT
7/9 Charleston, WV
8/7 Boston, MA

People-Power and Profits
5/29 Williamsburg, VA
7/15 Newark, NJ
7/17 Portsmouth, NH

Tools for Training
7/9 Phoenix, AZ
8/13 Tulsa, OK

Food Production Courses

Creative Buffets
7/15 Louisville, KY
8/3 New Orleans, LA

The Pantry: Prep for Profit
6/11 Orlando, FL
8/1 Hartford, CT

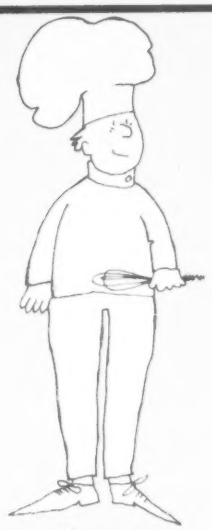
Perfecting Your Culinary Skills
6/5 Hyannis, MA
7/30 Cleveland, OH

Simplified Baking Workshop
6/6 Detroit, MI
8/13 Hyde Park, NY

Soups and Sauces
6/10 Orlando, FL
6/12 Columbia, SC
8/5 Detroit, MI

Foodservice Management Courses

Computers in Foodservice: A Primer
6/3 Boston, MA
6/25 Minneapolis, MN
7/11 Portland, OR
7/23 San Jose, CA
8/13 Milwaukee, WI



Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology
6/4 Boston, MA
6/26 Minneapolis, MN
7/22 Seattle, WA
8/5 San Jose, CA
8/14 Milwaukee, WI

Creative Merchandising Techniques
6/24 Cincinnati, OH

Food Cost Management
6/25 Madison, WI
6/27 Billings, MT
7/15 Sarasota, FL
8/12 Vienna, VA

Menu Development
6/19 Norfolk, VA
7/23 Madison, WI
7/25 Saginaw, MI

Off-Premise Catering
6/3–4 Portland, OR
6/24–25 Denver, CO

Operational Analysis
6/5–6 Los Angeles, CA

Planning & Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy
6/10–11 Orlando, FL
7/10–11 New Orleans, LA
8/7–8 Pittsburgh, PA

Please note that registration fees have been reduced for the Basic Foodservice Courses.

For more information, please contact:
NRA Education Programs
311 First Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
800-424-5156 or
(202) 638-6100

Study Group Meetings

Foodservice Security Council
7/14–17 Newport Beach, CA

Labor Relations
7/15–16 Boston, MA

Safety Officers
7/17–19 Newport Beach, CA

Internal Audit
9/ 17–20 New Orleans, LA

Financial Officers
9/18–20 Boca Raton, FL

Tax Executives
9/18–20 Boca Raton, FL

EDP
10/15–18 Boston, MA

Marketing Executives
Fall, 1985

Market Research
Fall, 1985

Large Independent Operators
Fall, 1985

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
Fall, 1985

MAECO
Fall, 1985

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

NRA NEWS
Vol. 5 No. 5 May 1985

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Harris O. Machus
President and Owner
Harris O. Machus Enterprises, Inc.
Birmingham, Michigan

Each year during the NRA Show, the general membership elects new officers. This, then, is my last report to you as Chairman of the Board and President of your association.

My 12-month term has been exciting and eventful. NRA's goals can be described as education, promotion and protection. In each of these areas, there has been significant activity and great moments which will have a lasting effect on our association and our industry.

Consider the area of education. This past year NRA, in cooperation with the state restaurant associations, has offered 250 seminars in sites near you. More than 7,500 foodservice operators and employees have attended.

Providing educational programs

The National Conference program, which brings operators and experts together for three days of idea exchange, reached maturity this year. Conferences on marketing and promotion, wine selection and merchandising, computerization and catering were offered with approximately 200 people attending each conference.

I was privileged to open the new National Conference for Independent Operators. It was one of those great moments I mentioned. NRA had supplied the place and the occasion for the great community of independent operators within our industry to meet and exchange ideas.

Considered alongside NRA's Executive study groups, attended by executives from the chains, this new annual conference demonstrates the association's capacity to provide services for the great diversity of operations that constitute its membership. NRA is truly the forum of the whole foodservice industry.

Promoting the industry

Our second goal is promotion—placing the industry and its services before the public in a positive light. During the past 12 months, NRA press conferences, press releases and contacts have generated more than six thousand newspaper and magazine articles.

Wherever I have traveled on behalf of NRA, I have met with great media interest. I was continually questioned about NRA programs and industry trends. In February, I was invited to appear as your association president on ABC's "Good Morning, America" and given the opportunity to describe foodservice as an industry that is prospering through quick and creative response to consumer demand. They tell me five million people saw that interview.

But perhaps the greatest moment in regard to promoting the industry came at Christmas when President Reagan invited me as your representative to receive a plaque in the presence of the press corps. He was honoring us for the NRA Projects with Industry, which placed 10 thousand handicapped people in foodservice jobs in 1984. By honoring NRA at the White House, President Reagan focused attention on our industry as an important sector of the economy that employs eight million men and women.

Protecting the interests of the industry

I come last to what is today NRA's primary activity—protecting the industry against government intervention in our business.

NRA has been carefully monitoring legislative proposals to make certain that budget cuts or tax simplification do not place an unnecessary burden on the foodservice industry.

We are particularly anxious to prevent the elimination of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC), which allows us a tax credit for hiring from underprivileged segments of the population.

We are carefully watching proposals that would curtail deductions for business travel. They would be a serious blow to the whole hospitality industry.

And we are waging an on-going battle to prevent limitations being placed on the business meal deduction. Such a change in the tax code would cost the jobs of thousands of our employees and force many leading restaurants out of business. We will fight it to the end.

There has been significant success in regard to other political issues during this past year. Foodservice operators everywhere have embraced NRA's Alcohol Awareness program. They are sending bartenders and servers to the association's training course. They are eliminating promotional practices that might be perceived as fostering drunkenness, and they are joining in the national effort to educate the public about the dangers of drunk driving.

These people are in no way responsible for drunk driving, but they are taking responsible action to help reduce this broad social problem. By doing so, they are defending themselves against misguided legislation and third-party liability suits.

Another successful campaign involved a proposal that would have required us to place labels on menus or signs on walls when sulfites are present in restaurant foods. A study prepared by a panel of biologists for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommended just such a regulation as the solution to the sulfite problem.

In one of those great moments of which I spoke earlier, NRA spokesmen appeared before this panel and explained in detail why it is impossible for restaurateurs to label the contents of their food. Our explanation was thorough and convincing. The labeling proposal was stricken from the report. We were able to avoid the setting of a very dangerous precedent.

It is this kind of quick and effective action by your association that will help preserve a business environment in which we can continue to thrive.

I am proud to have been involved in the day-to-day workings of NRA during the past year. I am proud that our industry is represented by so successful an association. I thank you for giving me the honor of serving as your president.

During the last month, 264 members joined NRA. I welcome you to the most prestigious foodservice trade association in the world. Your participation in NRA will make your business grow and make the association more effective in its endeavors on your behalf. We're glad to have you with us.

Sincerely,

Harris

Harris O. Machus
President & Chairman of the Board

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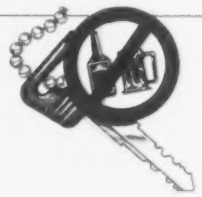

10 Operators care about teenagers in their communities and are doing their part to keep them from drinking and driving during the 1985 prom and graduation season.

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SHORT ORDERS

Reprint series begins

Filling job openings in the foodservice industry with well-qualified candidates will be one of the biggest challenges facing the foodservice industry during the next decade. *Building Excellence: Selecting, Motivating and Retaining a Professional Foodservice Staff* is the title of a new NRA publication that focuses on employee management.

The 52-page book is the first of a series of article compilations previously published in ***NRA NEWS.*** Seventeen articles provide a how-to look at making the most of full and part-time workers. Causes of employee turnover, how to motivate seasonal and hourly employees, and how to make use of employee incentives are some of the topics covered.

Building Excellence: Selecting, Motivating and Retaining a Professional Foodservice Staff is available to members and non-members for $11.95 plus $2.00 postage and handling. It can be ordered through NRA (publication number: MG865) or by writing: NRA, Publications Dept., 311 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

Liquor liability coverage update

The American Insurance Association (AIA) has provided NRA with a list of insurance companies that reportedly provide liquor liability coverage to restaurants. Most of the companies require the writing of the full liability line and include liquor liability as part of the total package because operators have had problems securing coverage in certain parts of the country. NRA is making the list available to members. Simply contact the NRA Legal Department at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 638-6100.

NRA's group insurance plan also provides liquor liability coverage as part of its general liability package. For more information about the plan, contact A.J. Bankovich of MarketDyne International, Inc., (404) 252-3703.

'Favorite restaurant' sweepstakes winner named

Customers of restaurants across the country recently competed with each other for the right to name their favorite establishment as the best in the Inglenook Celebration sweepstakes.

The program, sponsored by Heublein, Inc., producer of Inglenook wines, attracted more than 300,000 entries, all competing for the grand prize of an expense-paid trip to the restaurant of his or her choice anywhere in the country. Grand prize winner was Barbara Schultz of Hopkins, MN, who named the Bristol Bar & Grill in Minneapolis as her favorite restaurant. Schultz accepted the cash equivalent of $5,000 as her award, which will help her purchase a house. Two hundred first prizes of $100 each, to be used for dinner at a favorite local restaurant, were also awarded.

'Ice Cream for America' program set for July

The third annual "Ice Cream for America" program, sponsored by the International Association of Ice Cream Manufacturers (IAICM), is scheduled to coincide with National Ice Cream Month in July.

The program is designed to "celebrate America's love affair with ice cream," according to IAICM cochairmen Kenneth J. Douglas and John F. Garber.

"Ice Cream for America" is designed to stimulate regional and local festivals sponsored by ice cream companies and distributors throughout the U.S. during National Ice Cream Month. Contests, carnivals and charity events are being planned for the entire month and for National Ice Cream Day on July 15.

For more information on how you can promote "Ice Cream for America" in your establishment, contact IAICM, 888 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC, 20006, or call the Ice Cream Hotline: (202) 296-4255.

Free 'Bartenders Guide to Mocktails'

NRA Showgoers will have an opportunity to sample concoctions from the newly-published "Bartenders' Guide to Mocktails" as they check into three prominent Chicago hotels during the NRA Show this month. The Palmer House & Towers, the Hyatt Regency Chicago and McCormick Center Hotel will all be serving complimentary mocktails to NRA guests, using recipes from the booklet, which is published by Equal low-calorie sweetener and Le Gout natural juice bases.

The "Bartenders' Guide" is a collection of 25 mocktail recipes. New twists on old favorites, such as "Pina Not-A-Colada" and "Frozen Mockarita" are included in the booklet as well as new concoctions like "Cranberry Coconut Smoothie" and "Apricot Brandy Flip."

In addition to the booklet, Equal and Le Gout are sponsoring a nationwide contest for bartenders and other foodservice employees to create the "Great American Mocktail." Prizes include two grand prize trips to Acapulco plus cash awards. All winning recipes will be featured in a new mocktail collection to be published next fall.

For more information on the contest or to obtain your free copy of the booklet, call 1-800-323-6490. In Illinois call 312-678-1241.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Congress repeals auto log rules

Both the House and Senate have repealed the "contemporaneous" auto recordkeeping provision contained in the Tax Reform Act of 1984, relieving restaurateurs and other business people of burdensome new paperwork requirements.

The repeal legislation was adopted just before Congress adjourned for its Easter recess. Although the House and Senate approved differing versions, a conference committee is expected to iron out differences and President Reagan is expected to sign the legislation into law.

NRA joined over 50 other business groups in opposing IRS rules stemming from the 1984 law. NRA argued in testimony, submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee in March, that the new rules create unnecessary recordkeeping and compliance costs for businesses of all sizes.

The IRS rules required a log for each vehicle detailing the driver's name, mileage at start and finish of each leg of a trip, date, times and reasons for visits.

Members of Congress voted overwhelmingly for repeal, citing thousands of angry letters from constituents about the needless government paperwork. Many congressmen said they had received more mail on auto logs than on any issue in recent memory.

However, the House voted to limit depreciation write-offs for luxury automobiles to offset the revenue loss resulting from the repeal.

The House bill would reduce the investment tax credit from $1000 to $675, reduce maximum first-year depreciation from $4,000 to $3,600, and reduce the ceiling on subsequent-year depreciation from $6,000 to $5,400. In effect, the depreciation threshold for a luxury car would be $14,400, rather than $16,000—the total depreciation allowed over three years under current law.

The House bill would also require taxpayers to keep written evidence showing the business and personal use of their cars, a requirement that is more stringent than the pre-1984 rules but not nearly as burdensome as the new rules. Adequate written records to substantiate business use could include account books, diaries, logs, receipts, trip sheets or expense reports.

In addition, taxpayers claiming tax benefits for use of a car would be required to state on their returns: 1) total miles driven during the year; 2) percentage of personal use claimed; 3) whether the vehicle was used for commuting; 4) whether it was available for personal use in off-duty hours; 5) whether another vehicle was available for personal use; and 6) existing written evidence to justify deductions.

The Senate made almost no attempt to "pay for" repeal. Its bill does not include the depreciation limits adopted by the House, nor does it require that taxpayers keep written evidence to corroborate a taxpayer's business use claim.

However, the Senate bill would consider autos to be "listed property," meaning that expenses would be treated in the same manner as traveling expenses incurred away from home, a tougher standard than pre-1984 rules.

The Senate also passed language easing rules valuing personal flights on employer-provided aircraft.

Congress considers youth opportunity wage

Congress will once again consider the Reagan administration's proposal to create a summer youth opportunity wage. The two bills, similar to those introduced in the 98th Congress, would institute a wage of $2.50 an hour from May through September for youths between the ages of 16 and 19.

H.R. 1811 by Representative Trent Lott (R-MS) and S. 797 by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) were introduced on March 28. If enacted, their legislation would institute the youth wage for a three-year trial period. The trial period would allow Congress to judge the effectiveness of the youth wage in reducing teenage unemployment without committing the nation to a permanent youth wage scale.

Rep. Trent Lott

Sen. Orrin Hatch

Opponents of this proposal charge that a lower youth wage will give employers an incentive to fire or avoid hiring adults. Proponents point to employer sanctions against this kind of activity. The Hatch-Lott bill includes substantial penalties against employers who lay off full-time youth or adult workers in order to hire youth eligible for the wage—up to $10,000 in fines and six months in jail.

It is likely that Senate hearings on this proposal will be held in the near future since Hatch is chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. A hearing on the House side is less likely because Gus Hawkins (D-CA), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, has repeatedly voiced his opposition to a youth opportunity wage.

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOUR OPINION

NRA's monthly membership poll tracks your views on important national issues affecting the foodservice industry.

Your reponses to these questions will help NRA represent the industry in Washington.

Question 1: Plant closing notification?

Plant closings and permanent worker layoffs have been a cause for concern for many years. Labor groups point to the economic upheaval and worker dislocation that is often caused by closing a plant without warning. Between 1979 and 1984, 11.5 million workers were displaced due to plant closings.

Legislation to require employers to notify and consult with employees before closing a plant has been introduced in the past seven Congresses. A bill recently introduced by Rep. William Ford (D-MI) would require a 90-day notice for any plant closing that results in the permanent layoff of 50 or more employees. This includes restaurants. Employers would have to consult with existing unions on potential layoffs and possible alternatives and would be encouraged to provide information to employees in a non-union shop.

At least 10 states have plant-closing laws of one form or another. For example, Maine requires employers to provide severance pay at the rate of one week for each year of service; there is a $500 fine for non-compliance. Some states require job counseling and/or continuation of health insurance benefits.

- **PROS**—Steps must be taken to alleviate the economic and social upheaval of plant closings and layoffs. Providing advance notice of a plant closing could lessen the shock for the affected employees and offer them the opportunity to prepare for new jobs. Requiring employers to consult with their employees could bring to the surface alternatives to closing the plant, thereby avoiding dislocation.
- **CONS**—Requiring employers to consult with employees before closing a plant hampers the employer's right to control basic management decisions. Such a law would impede management's ability to make quick, flexible decisions on business operations. Also, the publicity surrounding a possible plant closing may, in itself, cause the plant to go under. Any hint of a possible closing could result in banks refusing new loans that could save the plant.

Should employers be required to give employees advance notice of plant closings?

Question 2: Meat inspection fees?

The Reagan administration has proposed industry "user" fees to pay for USDA inspection of meat and poultry. There is currently no charge for the inspection during regular business hours. The inspection, which is required by federal law, is conducted by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and costs about $350 million a year.

Under the Reagan proposal, USDA would phase in charges for these services over a period of three years. In 1986, fees would fund about one-third of the cost of inspection; the percent would increase in subsequent years.

The administration's proposed user fees are part of an attempt to wean the agriculture sector from government subsidies. However, processors say they cannot afford to absorb the cost of inspection and maintain that the fees will be passed on to consumers in the form of higher meat prices. Congress has looked at inspection fees in the past but hasn't been inclined to enact them.

- **Pros**—Those that benefit from special government services should pay for them. Taxpayers shouldn't have to foot the bill for services used by a small segment of the population or by private industry. Many agriculture services are already provided on a fee basis, and there is no reason to continue to provide inspection services to the meat industry at the public's expense.
- **Cons**—Inspection is not a service for which user fees are appropriate. USDA inspection is required by federal law to protect the public; it is not a private benefit to the meat industry. Americans rely on USDA inspectors to ensure the wholesomeness and purity of their meat. To maintain public confidence in the independence and integrity of meat inspection, inspectors should be paid by the government and not by those whose product they are inspecting. These proposed fees single out meat products with a cost not borne by other food products. It amounts to a tax on meat.

Should the meat processing industry be required to pay for USDA inspection?

Please respond to the above questions, using the attached postage-paid card.

Government waste report is available from NRA

As part of its effort to help the administration combat waste in government, NRA will send the report "We Can Blow the Whistle on Government Waste!" to any NRA member who requests it.

Published by the Foundation for the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, Inc., the report describes waste and inefficiency in the federal government and explains how private citizens can help eliminate it. NRA will provide a copy to members at no cost. Contact the NRA Government Affairs Department, (800) 424-5156. *(Limit: one per member.)*

The President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, chaired by J. Peter Grace, produced 2,478 ideas to reduce waste, inefficiency and overspending. Its recommendations are now being pursued by officials within the White House.

NRA has been studying the recommendations, especially three which may have some effect on the foodservice industry. These include proposals to:

- open to competitive bidding foodservice contracts administered by the Government Services Administration (GSA). Contract food operations in government-owned buildings had gross sales of $65 million in FY 1983.
- substitute commercial products for federal specification products. Traditionally, the government has used lengthy, detailed specifications to purchase food products, even though similar commercial products are less expensive.
- establish a uniform federal feeding policy, including systems for reporting and accountability. Federal feeding programs are both complex and diverse, yet no federal agency maintains comprehensive information on their total scope and cost.

The NRA's Efficiency in Government Study Group is examining ways to help implement these recommendations.

—Jay Morris
Michelle Rabayda

FDA moves toward sulfite ban

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), after being severely criticized by a House oversight panel for not acting quickly enough against sulfiting agents, is now reportedly moving toward a ban on the use of the additives on fresh produce and potatoes.

A ban on salad ingredients would be in keeping with an earlier NRA recommendation for a limited ban on fresh fruits and vegetables and pre-cut potatoes.

NRA first proposed a limited ban in November to protect restaurants and their patrons sensitive to sulfites. NRA has argued on numerous occasions that the alternative—labeling—would not adequately ensure the safety of individuals who may not be aware of their sulfite sensitivity.

The ban being considered by FDA would be nearly identical to a bill sponsored by Senator Al Gore (D-TN) and Representative Ron Wyden (D-OR) that makes it illegal to apply sulfites to fresh produce and potatoes. Gore and Wyden said they introduced their bill because FDA had failed to take action on sulfites. (See the April ***NRA NEWS*** for details.)

A ban would be a shift in FDA policy, which has been to encourage the states to enact labeling requirements at the retail level. But an FDA ban may take awhile. It most likely would have to be approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Labeling for processed foods . . .

The administration has also given final approval to stricter labeling requirements for processed foods containing sulfites. The proposed rules were published in the April 3 *Federal Register* and will become effective six months after publication of final rulemaking.

The proposed rules for processed foods require that sulfiting agents present in "significant" amounts be declared on the package label. Significant is defined as a detectable amount of 10 parts per million or more.

A similar proposal to label sulfites in drugs is still being delayed. HHS has not yet signed off on it.

Results of [redacted] March opinion poll

In the March Opinion Poll, ***NRA NEWS*** asked, "Should the SBA's loan programs be terminated and its other programs merged into the Commerce Department?" and "Should the concept of comparable worth be adopted as law?"

Sixty-five percent of the respondents believe that SBA's loan programs should be discontinued. Thirty-one percent think that SBA should be maintained, while four percent expressed no opinion.

More than three-quarters (78 percent) of the respondents are against adopting comparable worth as law, while only 20 percent want comparable worth to be adopted. Two percent expressed no opinion.

Sixty-nine percent of the March respondents said they operate a table-service establishment, 15 percent operate a fast food establishment, and nine percent operate a cafeteria.

Based on the information provided, the March sample represents 14,385 units employing 276,931 people.

OPERATION PROM GRADUATION Gets Underway

Operators care about the teenagers in their communities and are doing their part to keep them from drinking and driving during prom and graduation season.

by Anne Papa

Seniors at Batesville High School in Batesville, IN, will be spending less money this year on their prom and graduation festivities. At the local florist, they'll receive a 20 percent discount on all corsages and boutonnieres purchased for the prom. At a formal wear rental shop, they'll also be paying 20 percent less. And at the Sherman House Restaurant, a fine dining establishment perfectly suited for special occasions, students will get a 20 percent discount on all meals, plus a complimentary non-alcoholic drink.

In exchange for these discounts, seniors at Batesville High will pledge not to drink and drive during the prom/graduation season. They will also refrain from riding with friends who have been drinking.

Batesville is one of many cities across the nation where business owners have joined together to participate in Operation: Prom Graduation, a public service campaign aimed at reducing the number of alcohol-related traffic accidents among teenagers during the prom/graduation season. Restaurateurs, florists, formalwear and limousine rental companies, soft drink suppliers and broadcasters are all working together to communicate to the graduating class of 1985 that drinking and driving do not mix.

"Teenagers need someone besides their parents to impress upon them the dangers of drinking and driving," says George Brinkmoeller, owner of the Sherman House Restaurant. "Operation: Prom Graduation is one way for businesses in the community to help get the message across."

How the campaign works . . .

Operation: Prom Graduation was introduced to NRA members this past March by NRA President Harris Machus. It's being sponsored in cooperation with the National Association of Broadcasters, the American Floral Marketing Council, the National Automobile Dealers Association and the National Soft Drink Association.

The program is designed as follows: At the instigation of the National Association of Broadcasters, local TV broadcasters organize concerned business people in a town or city to meet to form a campaign task force. (In some areas in which TV broadcasters have failed to organize this task force, restaurateurs have taken the lead.) Together they determine which area schools to target, how much of a discount to offer and how to promote the program. They also design a pledge card, which is distributed to high school seniors through the schools or at the participating business locations. Although the wording on the card may vary from place to place, the premise is always the same: Students who sign the card pledge that, during the prom/graduation season, they will neither drive while under the influence of alcohol nor ride with a friend who has been drinking. The signed card is then honored with a discount at participating businesses during the prom/graduation season.

"It's a great way to reach kids—through their wallets," maintains Joni Erickson, director of public relations and sales for Michael's Restaurant in La Crosse, WI. Michael's has joined with a florist, a soft drink bottling company and a popular radio station to implement the program in La Crosse. "Especially on prom night,

kids are usually inclined to go way over their budget for dinner, flowers, the works," Erickson says. "They'll see these discounts being offered and say, 'Hey, that's worth it.' Suddenly, having a few drinks will seem less important to them."

Why participate? . . .

According to Erickson, Michael's Restaurant decided to participate in Operation: Prom Graduation out of concern for the dual problem of teens as underage drinkers and as drunk drivers. These concerns are shared by restaurateurs across the country.

Will Thomas, owner of Salida Inn in Salida, CO, was inspired to join in the campaign by a plaque which hangs in the front lobby of nearby Salida High School. "Engraved in that plaque are the names of more than a dozen students who have died during or just after graduation," he explains. "Most were alcohol-related fatalities. I knew half of them. Some of them even worked for me." Thomas plans to use a photograph of himself, the school's principal and other participating business owners standing around the plaque as promotional material for the campaign.

As a mother of high school students, involvement in the campaign was a natural for Ruth Rhoades of Chuck Muer's River Crab Restaurant, St. Clair, MI. "One of my children is just turning 17," says Rhoades. "This promotion enables me to watch over other parents' children, just as I'd hope they'd watch over mine." Says George Brinkmoeller of the Sherman House Restaurant, "Parents appreciate knowing their kids are in good hands. A promotion like this will earn their gratitude, and possibly, their patronage."

Indeed, participation in Operation: Prom Graduation not only demonstrates a sense of social responsibility, but it also makes good business sense. Neil Berman, president of Le Bistro Inc., which operates 15 Le Bistro Cafes throughout the Midwest, regards Operation: Prom Graduation as an excellent public relations vehicle. "This campaign gives us an excuse to contact the high schools," he explains. "To attract prom and graduation business, it helps tremendously to get name recognition just before the season begins. Through this promotion we'll be sending letters to all high schools in our marketing area, followed by phone calls. Teachers,

"It's a great way to reach kids."

parents and students will all be hearing about us." Berman also notes that, although a number of high-traffic holidays fall in April and May, special occasions in the month of June are comparatively few. "We needed a promotional idea for June, and Operation: Prom Graduation fits the bill," he says.

Joni Erickson agrees that the added publicity potential for Michael's Restaurant also convinced her to participate. She has sent out press releases to all high schools, radio stations and televison stations in the area. She's been interviewed by a local paper for a feature article on the campaign. And posters, table tents and stickers with the "Class of 85—Alive" logo, as well as the names of all participating businesses, are displayed prominently throughout the restaurant and at area schools.

Campaign is designed to be flexible . . .

Just as each restaurateur has specific reasons for participating in Operation: Prom Graduation, so does each have specific ideas on how the campaign should be conducted. From variations on discount amounts to special promotions centering on the

"Parents appreciate knowing their kids are in good hands."

prom/graduation theme, Operation: Prom Graduation is designed to meet diverse needs.

George Brinkmoeller of the Sherman House Restaurant says the 20 percent discount he'll be offering was agreed upon by all members of his campaign task force. Joni Erickson says cardholders at Michael's Restaurant will receive one dollar off each meal ordered—again, a decision made by the La Crosse task force. Additionally, diners at Michael's will be served soft drinks free of charge, donated by the participating soft drink bottling company. Larry Richardson, owner of Richardson's Catering in Anderson, SC, plans to combine the discount he'll be offering in his restaurant with a discount for customers who buy their prom outfits at the formal wear shop next door, which he also owns. Students with pledge cards who buy their gowns or tuxedos at his store will be entitled to a reduced price on a steak dinner for two.

Many operators have taken the campaign a step further by sponsoring promotions which build on the Operation: Prom Graduation theme. The Sherman House Restaurant is hosting a complimentary "mocktail" party for the Class of 1985 during graduation week. At the State Line Truck Stop in New Paris, OH, owner Stan Van Ausdal is planning a special party called the "After Prom," to be held in the wee hours of the morning after prom night. "Kids look forward to taking off their formal clothes, putting on their jeans and just relaxing," he says. "We'll promote our After Prom party with a special breakfast, offering a 20 percent discount to kids with pledge cards." And in Somerville, MA, the foodservice branch of the Somerville school system is considering catering the Senior Class Day picnic free of charge if enough students sign pledge cards. Henry Biagi, foodservice director, says the school system hopes this will be an incentive for students to participate in the program.

Ruth Rhoades of Chuck Muer's River Crab is sponsoring a non-alcoholic drink mixing contest in area high schools to promote the River Crab's participation in the campaign. Preliminary "Mix Offs" will be held at each of seven local high schools, with school administrators, teachers and River Crab employees acting as judges. The seven semifinalists—one from each school—will then compete in the grand prize "Mix Off," to be held at the River Crab a week or two before prom/graduation season begins. All preliminary and grand prize winners will receive cash awards, and their winning concoctions will be featured on a special menu being compiled for the summer season. Says Rhoades, "The contests call for student participation, which is an excellent way to kick off our campaign."

"Because," she adds, "when all is said and done, it is students' involvement in Operation: Prom Graduation that will make it a success. We're doing this because we care about them." ❑

American cooking is here to stay. The United States victories at the Culinary Olympics last fall proved to the world that American cooking is a serious cuisine.

In fact, it has been distinctive for some time. The large body of recipes and historical data available to operators documents the fact that America's culinary tradition has long been in the making.

"Folklore and techniques brought by successive generations of immigrants have built like a stack of pancakes, one atop the other, resulting in a culinary heritage sometimes elegant, sometimes down-home and practical," points out The Culinary Institute of America's *The American Bounty Sampler.*

"Now, as we look more closely at what's beneath that stack, we can see that colonists, Indians and immigrants from all over the world each contributed their own special flavor to the melting pot, helping to develop a national cuisine composed from hundreds of diverse elements."

In the five-part series of articles that begins here, the *NRA NEWS* will look more closely at this heritage by exploring the characteristic styles of cooking in five regions of the country: the Southwest, New England, California and the West Coast, the Midwest and the South.

In each story the focus will be on the history, culture, ingredients, techniques and trends that have given the cuisine its distinctive appeal so that operators everywhere will come to understand, appreciate and perhaps build on the styles prevalent in regions other than their own.

First of a five-part series

Tastes of the SOUTHWEST

A variety of cooking styles have evolved from the Southwest's indigenous flavors and cultural and geographic traditions. Some of the major elements that characterize the Southwestern cuisine of today include Tex-Mex, barbecue, chili and the New Southwestern cuisine.

by Cecelia Niepold

Aztec traditions, chuckwagon innovations and pungent chile peppers are just a few of the ingredients that make up the melting pot of Southwestern cuisine. A rich cultural history, along with a bounty of indigenous spices and natural resources, has produced a variety of cooking styles and flavors that are distinctly Southwestern.

The cultural background of the area is itself a colorful mosaic. Aztecs, conquistadors, Mexicans, American Indians and cattle ranchers have all left their mark on the region's cuisine as have the neighboring Cajun and Southern traditions. For instance, corn tortillas harken back 2,000 years to the Aztecs while wheat, rice, onions, beef and dairy products were introduced by the Spanish in the 1500s.

Indigenous spices and food products form the backbone of the region's cuisine although usage of these ingredients varies according to local traditions. For example, rainbow colors of chile peppers spice up dishes throughout the Southwest. In New Mexico, however, dishes are characterized by green chiles while Texas is known for its fiery red chiles. Along the same lines, the familiar tortilla is often made with blue corn in Santa Fe while flour tortillas are specialties in Dallas.

Tex-Mex—a combination of cultures

Tex-Mex is probably the most well-known form of Southwestern cooking. It is exactly what its name implies—a combination of Mexican and American flavors. Much of the development of Tex-Mex occurred in Texas—hence the name.

Although Tex-Mex entrees are now served from Maine to Oregon, its roots are firmly entrenched in the Southwest. "The Mexican influence has been integrated into the Southwest more strongly than in any other part of the country because the ingredients are here, the taste buds are here and the expectations are here," explains Anne Gréer, a Texas restaurant consultant and the author of *Cuisine of the American Southwest.*

Not just tacos and beans . . .

Tex-Mex food is generally characterized by different kinds of tortillas stuffed with various ingredients, spicy chiles and piquant hot sauces. Many dishes, however, take advantage of the abundance of local fruit and vegetables. For instance, grilled vegetables, such as summer and winter squash, are common. Candied pumpkins, sweet potatoes, cacti and oranges are favorite sweets. Anne Greer points out that these "thick, soft morsels" are a pleasant way to neutralize palates after hot salsa.

Chorizo (sausage made with red chile, oregano, vinegar, garlic and sometimes cumin) and mesquite-grilled fish and beef are also part of Tex-Mex cooking.

A natural evolution . . .

The evolution of Tex-Mex has been a natural progression. Southwestern residents, influenced by the traditions and tastes of nearby Mexico, simply adapted Mexican recipes to suit their own palates.

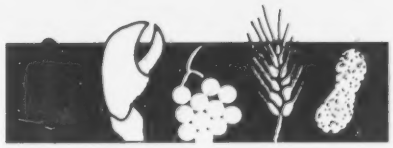
Tex-Mex varies from Mexican cooking in several ways. The flavor is altered by the use of American ingredients, which are substituted for those native to Mexico. Also, Tex-Mex entrees are often less spicy than traditional Mexican foods and generally have a lighter, fresher taste.

Irene Garcia, chairman of the board emeritus of El Fenix, one of the oldest Mexican restaurant chains in the country, describes one way her father Americanized a Mexican dish when he opened his first restaurant in Dallas 67 years ago: "In Mexico, enchiladas have tomato sauce on them. We took the Mexican enchilada and put Texas chili on it, and that made it Tex-Mex." Although entrees may be milder than traditional Mexican dishes, Tex-Mex is still known for its fiery flavors.

Special techniques add spice . . .

A variety of techniques and traditions give Tex-Mex entrees that special spicy blend.

Regional cooks are proud of the way they carefully blend chiles and spices to create the built-in heat. "Controlling the intensity of the peppers is very important—it's a lot of trial and error," maintains Dean Fearing, chef at The Verandah Club in Dallas. One tip offered by Mary Nell Reck, chef/partner at the Truffles Restaurant in Houston, is to watch



the size of the peppers. "When substituting peppers, generally, the larger the chile, the milder the flavor."

Working with peppers is an art. Stephan Pyles, owner/chef of The Routh Street Cafe in Dallas, suggests rubbing oil on your hands before cutting peppers to prevent the heat from burning your skin.

Even making basic tortillas and guacamole involves specialized techniques. According to Reck, corn tortillas should be made from masa harina—a flour made of parched corn that has been treated with lime and finely ground. Ordinary cornmeal will not do the tortillas should then be cooked on an iron grid or skillet (they often stick to aluminum). The temperature level is also important. "A tortilla that's cooked too slowly can be dry and tough," she says.

For guacamole, mashing the avocados with a traditional molcajete—a small three-legged mortar with a pestle made out of lava rock—creates the proper texture. "The molcajete makes the guacamole half puree and half chunky. If you make it in a blender it is too smooth," she says. She also advises using crushed serrano chiles to maintain the guacamole's green color. "Lime juice, which many people use, actually leeches the color," she warns.

Home on the range

Cooking techniques, developed out of necessity on the range by Mexican vaqueros and American cowhands, have become savory signatures of today's Southwest.

Chiles and spices

Pungent chiles and spices create the zesty flavors in Southwestern food. The following are some of the herbs and chiles that frequently spice up regional dishes.

Chiles

- *Ancho* (ahn-cho), dried poblano chile, the "chile con carne" chile used in many commercial chile powders, gives a rich, mahogany color to a sauce.
- *Cas cabel* (kahs-kah-vel), dried, red, moderately hot chile.
- *Chile pequin* (peh-keen), very small and very potent dried red chiles.
- *Jalapeno* (ha-la-pain-yoh), shiny, fat, small, dark green chile about 2 ½ inches by 1 inch—hot.
- *Poblano* (po-bla-no), large, dark green chile with a mild to medium hot flavor.
- *Serrano* (seh-rahn-o), smallest green chile, very hot.

Spices

- *Anchiote* (ah-chee-oh-teh), deep orange seeds prized for the yellow color they impart to foods, also available in paste.
- *Anise* (an-es), licorice-scented seeds or oil used for pastries or syrups.
- *Azafran* (ah-sah-frahn), saffron.
- *Canela* (kah-neh-lah), cinnamon bark used in meat fillings, sauces and desserts.
- *Cilantro* (see-lan-tro), fresh coriander, sometimes called Chinese parsley. Taste complements and tempers hot chiles.
- *Cumin* (ku-men), aromatic seeds are ground and used extensively in soups, sauces and meat dishes.
- *Epazote* (en-pah-soh-teh), Mexican herb often used in beans because it reduces bloating.
- *Manzanilla* (mahn-sahn-nee-ya), dried flowers used to make a flavorful tea.

Source: *Cuisine of the Southwest*

Barbecue . . .

Although food is barbecued across the country, the barbecue of the Southwest is something special. Born out on the trail, barbecue has become a mainstay of the region's diet. Chuck wagon cooks originated the basic procedures. They smoked low quality meat for hours to make it more tender and added spicy sauces for flavor.

Today's barbecue has become somewhat more sophisticated, but the mouth-watering open-fire flavors remain a trademark. Barbecued beef brisket and sausage are top favorites in the Southwest. "Brisket lends itself well to long cooking and basting," explains Mary Faulk Koock, former

owner of Green Pastures in Austin and the author of *The Texas Cookbook*. Ribs, chicken, smoked ham and turkey are also popular.

Cooking procedures give the Southwest barbecue its distinctive flavor. Ed Dozier, owner of Dozier's General Store and Barbecue in Fulshear, TX, seasons his briskets with red and black pepper, salt and paprika before cooking them six to nine hours. While they are cooking, he mops them with a white vinegar and oil mixture. "The oil has a tendency to make the vinegar stick to the meat, while the vinegar gives it flavor and also helps tenderize the meat as it's cooking," he explains.

Richard Jones, owner of Richard Jones Pit Barbecue in Austin, smokes his meat between 18 and 24 hours and has developed a rotisserie cooking pit that prevents drippings from splattering grease on the food. "Drippings that fall in the fire and burn give meat a bad, greasy taste," he maintains.

Barbecuers swear by the kind of wood they use. Richard Jones cooks over hickory and oak wood and says it is important to find wood that complements the meat. Ed Dozier smokes his barbecue over pecan wood. "It has a good clean smoke, doesn't leave a film on the meat and gives a good flavor," he explains.

The way barbecue sauce is used is also distinctive. "So many people throw meat in an oven, pour barbecue sauce on it and call it barbecue," explains Dozier. Texas cooks don't use barbecue sauce to baste meat, they offer it as an accompaniment. The reason? "Cooking with sauce can hide the flavor of the meat," says Jones.

Chili . . .

Chili con carne (beef with chiles), the favorite Southwestern dish, also originated on the open range. Mexican cowboys added chile peppers and spices to beef as it marinated, producing a basic dish with a definite spark.

Chili continues to be popular in the Southwest—Texans have even named it the state dish. Naturally, techniques and flavors vary across the region, but the basic aim is the same everywhere: Make it hot and hearty.

Most Texan chili is made with cubes of beef or coarsely ground meat. "Bigger chunks of meat give more body to the chili," explains Tom Nall, vice president of sales for Two Alarm Chili in Austin.

Seasoning is also important. As Nall explains, "It's the quality of spices and their blend that makes chili special. You can't have good chili without good chile pepper." Some of the ingredients in Texas chili are ground ancho or dried poblano chile peppers (which give a rich mahogany color to the sauce), ground cumin and garlic, cayenne (a very hot chile pepper), paprika and onion.

The chili served in New Mexico is milder than the fiery red dish that Texans love partly because it is made with the green chiles that grow abundently in the area. Green chiles are a little milder than red chiles. Another difference is the kind of meat used. "Our chili is characterized more by pork than beef because we're high in the mountains and don't have many cows," explains Kate Tremper, owner of Massee's in Santa Fe.

Fajitas . . .

Perhaps the latest comer from the ranch cooking tradition is the fajita. It is a sizzling dish generally made with thinly sliced skirt steak wrapped in a flour tortilla. Although it is being touted as something new, it has been part of the Southwestern tradition of outdoor cooking for a long time. Ranch hands, to utilize every piece of meat, tenderized the low quality skirt steak with lime juice before grilling.

Today, restaurateurs are using a variety of marinades and presentations to add pizazz to the entree. For example, Paul Heyd, owner of On the Border in Austin, serves fajitas in sizzling molcajetes. The plate is filled with lettuce, guacamole, pico de gallo (relish made out of tomatoes, onions and cilantro) and sour cream. Customers can "build their own" fajitas with the various ingredients. "It's like a buffet you can sit down at," notes Heyd. Although generally made with skirt steak, Heyd also offers chicken, pork and shrimp fajitas.

Restaurateurs are also serving fajitas by the pound so people can share the dish.

The New Southwestern Cuisine

With so many traditions in close proximity, it is no wonder that a new

Pairing wine with Southwestern cooking

Wine has been a part of Southwestern cuisine since Spanish priests began cultivating grapes in Texas during the 18th century. Today, Southwestern restaurateurs, particularly those experimenting with the new Southwestern cuisine, are putting increased emphasis on creatively blending wines with the area's spicy flavors.

In response to this trend, Berringer Vineyards of California recently held a wine pairing competition in Dallas for sous chefs. One major point became evident. Marrying wines with the piquant tastes of the Southwest requires careful thought.

Tor Kenward, vice president of winery communications, offers a few guidelines for successful harmonies.

- Avoid using an extremely refined wine with very spicy foods because the dish will dominate. Try a simple generic white wine or a good crisp California Chablis.
- A really, really hot dish might be best combined with a simple Sangria to cool down the taste buds.
- A Chardonnay with corn dishes can be a flavorful combination.
- Soups made with chiles and peppers work nicely with a Savignon Blanc.
- Mesquite-grilled fish needs a wine with a certain amount of flavor, such as a fuller bodied Chardonnay or Savignon Blanc because the wood adds a distinctive taste.

cuisine is emerging in the Southwest. Local chefs call it the New Southwestern cuisine.

"It's been a natural evolution," explains Anne Greer. "As Americans across the country became more interested in their roots, chefs started to look at the traditional foods in their area." "It's a real renaissance period. There's such a heritage here, and people are proud of the local products," maintains Stephan Pyles.

New flavor combinations . . .

The New Southwestern cuisine has a distinct personality. Anne Greer describes it as "harmonious, intense flavors and clean, straightforward tastes."

Producing these flavors is the result of combining local products in nontraditional ways. "We're using ingredients that you see in Tex-Mex restaurants, but ours are done in a more sophisticated manner," says Pyles. "For example, we make a game tamale with antelope or venison, red wine, ancho chiles and corn."

Exotic Mexican fruits and vegetables add color and flavor to the new Southwestern cuisine dishes. For instance, Pyles uses sapote (a fruit with the texture of cooked sweet potatoes that tastes a little like pumpkin) in a sapote pecan pie with whiskey butter. Dean Fearing makes a vinaigrette by straining the juice of a cactus pear. "It's bright purple and adds gorgeous color to a dish," he says. Sam Avner, chef at The Mansion on Turtle Creek in Dallas, uses the cactus fruit to make a delicious sherbet.

Chefs are also experimenting with cross-cultural dishes. Fearing, for example, has created a variety of pasta dishes with chiles.

Other examples of foods that are becoming trademarks of the New Southwestern style include

- combinations of herb and vegetable relishes, such as tomatillo (little green tomatoes) salsa, pickled poblano peppers, apple and green chile preserves, cilantro pesta and even black bean relishes
- butter sauces made with epazote (Mexican herb) and cilantro (fresh coriander) and
- smoked or grilled game, such as wild boar, black buck antelope and Texas bobwhite quail.

Meticulous techniques . . .

Meticulous preparation and classical cooking techniques, primarily from the French tradition, are integral parts of the New Southwestern cuisine. "It's more than just using natural ingredients. It's taking those styles, like smoking or grilling, and refining them to present each individual ingredient in the freshest, most tasty way," maintains Greer.

A major characteristic of this cuisine is the careful blending of herbs and spices. Chefs concentrate on harmonizing a few select flavors, rather than combining a host of tastes. Patrick Columbo, the food and beverage manager at The Mansion on Turtle Creek, originally served dishes with a lot of mixed herbs but found that the flavors combated each other. "Now we spend more time and emphasis on the flavor of one herb to make that taste stand out," he explains. Columbo also focuses on combining herbs to produce contrast. For instance, his ancho ice cream combines the sweetness of ice cream with the tartness of the ancho chili.

Smoking and grilling are also emphasized heavily in the New Southwestern cuisine. Again, technique is important. Lawton Haygood, owner of Turtle Cove in Dallas, developed his own grill to evenly cook meats without searing them. "Scorched fish can be very bitter," he warns.

Different varieties of wood are used to flavor different kinds of food. For instance, Haygood suggests using hickory wood with fattier dishes, such as pork and lamb, because it lends a sweeter taste. "Mesquite is more pungent and goes better with seafood and chicken," he says. Sam Avner at The Mansion on Turtle Creek uses a wide variety of woods to add special flavors. Salmon is grilled over rosewood, and bacon is smoked over apple wood.

Grilling can also be used to add depth of flavor to ingredients. Stephan Pyles smokes tomatoes before using them in a tomato salsa. ❑

Glossary of Southwestern dishes

Here are a few definitions of some favorite Southwestern dishes:

- **Bunuelo** (boon-yuel-oh), fried round pastries.
- **Burrito** (boo-ree-toh), soft, 14–18-inch flour tortilla rolled and filled with meats, beans and other favorites.
- **Chalupa** (cha-lu-pah), a round corn tortilla, fried crisp. In Mexico, the edges were curled up (hence the name "little boat").
- **Chili con Queso** (con-keh-so), classic Southwestern combination of cheese, chiles, onions and sometimes tomatoes or red chile.
- **Chili Rellenos** (reh-yeh-nos), poblano chiles stuffed with meat, cheese or other fillings, deep fried in egg batter and served with tomato sauce.
- **Chimichango** (chee-mee-chan-goh), large flour tortillos folded "burrito style" and deep fried. Topped with cheese, guacamole or sauces.
- **Enchilada** (en-chee-lah-tah), rolled or stacked corn tortilla, with cheese, onion, beef or chicken or chili con carne.
- **Fajita** (fah-hee-tos), grilled or broiled skirt steak rolled in a flour tortilla. Variations include pork, shrimp and chicken.
- **Flan** (flahn), light custard dessert with a caramel syrup.
- **Flauta** (fl-ow-ta) means "flute" and refers to the shape of a crisp, rolled corn tortilla filled with chicken or other meats.
- **Frijoles Refritos** (reh-free-tohs), well fried beans.
- **Picadillo** (pee-kah-dee-yoh), ground or shredded meat used for fillings and stuffings.
- **Salsa** (sal-sah), hot sauce often made with chopped onions, jalapeno chiles and cilantro.
- **Sopaipilla** (soh-pa-pee-yah), puffed, fried bread. Often stuffed with fillings and served with melted cheese or sauce. Some are sweet.
- **Tamale** (tah-mah-leh), fresh cornmeal filled with beef or other sweet or savory fillings and steamed.
- **Tostada** (tohs-tah-tho), flat, fried tortillas with meats, lettuce, tomatoes and beans piled on top with different garnishes.

Winners in the 1985

Simplicity, clean graphics and appealing color combinations made El Torito Restaurants' (Irvine, CA) menu the grand prize winner in NRA's 22nd Annual Great Menu Contest.

These characteristics are immediately evident on the menu's cover. A long white panel, bordered by tan and purple, is interrupted only by the restaurant's name and three geometric shapes. Inside each shape are drawings that depict exotic Mexican scenes: Inside a triangle is an ancient church in Guadalajara, inside a square is a tropical beach scene in La Paz, and inside a circle is a cliff diver in Acapulco. The six contest judges agreed that the colorful, contained drawings surrounded by vast white space created an effect that was vivid, yet clean and uncluttered.

The drawings within geometric shapes are continued on the menu's inside panels as is the use of space. The menu items are categorized under bold, legible heads; the prices are clearly visible and the descriptions are straightforward, yet tempting. The effect is one of clean sophistication that is equally as pleasing to the eye as it is tempting to the palate.

There are special touches as well to make patrons comfortable—from the children's menu to burgers for more American tastes. Combination platters are also available as are "Mexican favorites" and a la carte items. There is also a brief statement on one panel which welcomes diners to "the authenticity of food and gracious service that is characteristic of Mexico . . . Welcome and Buen Provecho!" On the back panel a list of Mexican foods with their pronunciations and brief descriptions are provided for the uninitiated diner.

Overall, El Torito's menu exemplifies the basic qualities the judges were looking for: It shows imagination, good design and effective merchandising power.

Menu creates fun image . . .

In contrast, almost every inch of space is used on the menu entered by Buffalo Chips (Oar House: Grand American Fare, Santa Monica, CA), chosen as second grand prize winner. What the menu lacks in simplicity, however, it makes up for in liveliness and fun.

Buffalo Chips' menu is printed in one color on a tan, over-sized foldout sheet. On the outer flap is a photograph of a beach scene circa 1920s. Inside, the 11 by 17 inch menu is literally covered with spirited descriptions of the restaurant's offerings, which consist mainly of sandwiches. The selections range from hamburgers of all kinds to hot dogs and tuna sandwiches. They all have one thing in common—they sound as though they can satisfy the largest appetite. For instance, the "Thunder Humper" (chili burger) is described as being "smothered with mouth watering chili, cheese, onions and served with fries. A fork may come in handy to conquer this giant!" And about the "Hawt Dawg" choices, "Our wonder weenies are thick as a brick!" The judges agreed that these descriptions gave the impression of value for the money—especially since sandwiches range between $2.19 and $3.69, while soup or salad with french fries costs less than a dollar.

1985 Great Menu Contest Winners

Grand prize winners

First Place
El Torito Restaurants, Inc.
Irvine, CA

Second Place
Buffalo Chips/Oar House: Grand American Fare
Santa Monica, CA

Third Place
Max & Erma's Restaurants
Columbus, OH

Average check under $5 per person

First Place
Delta Food Service T/A La Prima
Alexandria, VA

Second Place
Sweet Shoppe
Laurens, SC

Third Place
Hale Koa Hotel
Honolulu, HI

Average check $5–$10 per person

First Place
Chancery Pub & Restaurant
Wauwatosa, WI

Second Place
Country Cupboard
Lewisburg, PA

Third Place
Carlos Murphy's
San Diego, CA

Average check over $10 per person

First Place
El Torito Restaurants, Inc.
Irvine, CA

Second Place
Winter Palace, The Sheraton Centre of Toronto (Dinner menu)
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Third Place
Plata Grande Restaurant
Beltsville, MD

Banquet/catering

First Place
Kuala Lumpur Hilton
Banquet brochure

Second Place
Milwaukee Marriott
Brookfield, WI

Third Place
Park West Catering
Chicago, IL

Great Menu Contest

The judges admired the hand-lettered typefaces used on the menu and the fanciful illustrations, saying the variations add to its festive image and call attention to each item.

And, finally, the menu won points because it is designed to be used as a mail-out. The back flap is labelled "Post Card" and has room for messages, an address and a stamp. "The menu immediately doubles its worth because it can be used both as an in-house and a direct mail marketing piece," commented Carl Jerome, one of the contest judges. "Combine this with the maximum use of space inside the menu and the result is a dynamite sales tool, produced at minimal cost."

Summer menu suggests cool refreshment . . .

The third grand prize was awarded to Max & Erma's Restaurants of Columbus, OH, for its three-dimensional summer menu. The menu is actually a wooden, chocolate-covered vanilla bar, complete with a wooden stick and a bite taken out of the top.

"One look at this menu and you're craving something cool and refreshing," said contest judge Jeanette Riechers. Judge Ellen Brown agrees, "This menu gives new meaning to the term 'suggestive selling.'"

The menu lists "refreshing summer swizzlers" (drinks) on one side and Max & Erma's 1984 summer menu on the other. Item descriptions are kept brief because the item names alone are usually enough to evoke images of cool refreshment. For instance, the drink menu lists such specialties as "Seabreeze" and "California lemonade," while the summer menu lists mostly salads, with freshly squeezed lemonade or orangeade and a frozen "fruit smoothie" for non-drinkers.

There are no ice cream selections on the menu.

In sum . . .

The 1985 grand prize winning menus use different styles to represent three very different establishments. But in spite of these differences, the award-winning menus are all creative and effective marketing tools.

—Anne Papa

Specialty

First Place
T.G.I. Friday's Inc.
Addison, TX

Second Place
The Sheraton New Orleans Hotel & Towers
New Orleans, LA

Third Place
Holiday Inns Inc.
Memphis, TN

Institutional foodservice

First Place
Fairfax County Public Schools Foodservice
Springfield, VA

Second Place
Harper-Grace Hospital, Grace Division
Detroit, MI

Third Place
Air Canada/In-Flight Service Headquarters
Dorval, Quebec, Canada

Best design

First Place
Rusty Pelican
Irvine, CA

Second Place
Stouffer's Riverview Plaza Hotel
Mobile, AL

Third Place
Daisy Flour Mill Inc.
Rochester, NY

Merchandising power

First Place
Chancery Pub & Restaurant (Opening Day—Baseball)
Wauwatosa, WI

Second Place
Chancery Pub & Restaurant (Special edition menu)
Wauwatosa, WI

Third Place
Chancery Pub & Restaurant (Pub Burger Press)
Wauwatosa, WI

Most imaginative

First Place
Max & Erma's Restaurant
Columbus, OH

Second Place
Tokyo-Hilton International
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Third Place
Peppermill Inn & Casino
Reno, NV

Menu contest judges

The judges of the 22nd Annual Great Menu Contest were

- **Peter Berlinski,** executive editor, *Restaurant Business,* New York, NY
- **Ellen Brown,** food writer, Washington, DC
- **John Gruner,** president, Gruner Solutions, Richmond, VA
- **Carl Jerome,** freelance writer, *The Washington Post,* Washington, DC
- **Jack Miller,** chairman, Hospitality Restaurant Management and Tourism, St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, St. Louis, MO, and
- **Jeanette Riechers,** editor in chief, *Independent Restaurants,* Madison, WI.

Part one of a three-part series

Planning a new restaurant from feasibility to menu concept in 7 days

As this article suggests, assessing the appropriateness of a restaurant's location and concept need not be a time-consuming process. But the seven-day formula outlined here is merely a rule of thumb. The actual length of time required to complete each task will vary from one location to the next, depending on the accessibility of resources, a restaurateur's time and experience and a number of other variables. Thus, while seven days may be all the time needed to plan one operation, it could take several times as long to complete the legwork for another establishment.

by Maurice P. Minno & Rohit Bhayana

Seven days may seem like a minimal amount of time to plan a restaurant. Yet once a specific site has been chosen for a restaurant, it generally takes foodservice consultants around seven days to conduct the preliminary field work for a restaurant feasibility project. At seven days end, they can determine whether the project is financially feasible and what general concepts will work.

Conducting your own feasibility study and developing the initial menu concept may take more (or less) than seven days, depending on your previous restaurant experience and familiarity with the location. Here are some ways you can proceed during those seven days. Since the tasks to be performed are interrelated, the order is flexible and may be juggled to fit the particular situation. The completion of appropriate tasks is important, not the sequence.

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Day : organization and site acquaintance

On the first day, you want to

- plan for the week
- visit and study the proposed site and
- begin to visit competitive restaurants within the primary market area.

When planning the week, decide where you need to go and with whom you need to speak. County, city, local and private organizations offer invaluable information for the feasibility process. The accompanying side bar, "Restaurant Feasibility Study Resources," lists some of these organizations and the information available. The area's telephone directory also can be used to find addresses and telephone numbers for various organizations.

Then, plot the chosen sources onto an area map, charting a course that will be the least time-consuming. A good starting point is usually with the chamber of commerce, regional planning board and economic development authority.

Site and locational analysis . . .

Once you have planned the week's activities, visit the proposed site. Take a small hand-held tape recorder with you. It is ideal for recording your thoughts and ideas.

As you approach the site, observe how easy or how difficult it was to get there. Did traffic or road patterns make it hard to reach? If you walked, did you have to cross a major roadway to get to the proposed restaurant? Studies show that when office buildings, developments and parking areas are on one side of a major street and the restaurant is on the other side, patrons are less likely to cross the street, especially during an hour lunch break.

Once at the location, note its physical characteristics. Include the placement of trees, the land's general contours and appearance as well as the physical conditions of any existing structures. If the property is not developed, you will need to have a topographical survey to determine its suitability for construction.

Your next step should be to identify all that bounds the site, in the process defining your primary market area. Drive or walk in each direction from the site, noting roads, natural barriers, residential areas, commercial and industrial development, schools, churches (which may affect liquor licensing), possible competitive restaurants and shopping centers. How far you go depends on the particular location. If the site is in a downtown development, your primary market area may only be within a 10-minute walk. However, in a suburban location, the area may increase to a 10 to 15-minute driving radius from the proposed restaurant.

As you canvass the region, study the flow of traffic. When traveling at the speed limit on an adjacent road, does the site register as you pass by, or is it a blur? The more it is visible,

the better the chances for "impulse buying"—the possibility that people will stop at the restaurant without having planned to beforehand.

Additional information about traffic plans and patterns and proposed developments can be collected at either the highway department or economic development authority. These organizations may also have vehicle traffic counts by the day, hour and season, which would allow you to estimate the number of people who pass by each day. An hourly count is helpful for estimating the potential number of guests for each meal period.

Competitive restaurants . . .

At this point, you should know where your patrons may come from and which restaurants may compete with your proposed establishment. Note other restaurants in the area, read dining guides and restaurant reviews and search the telephone directories for possible competitors.

Dine at as many competitive restaurants as is practical, concentrating on those that are popular and/or unique. These experiences will suggest what type of ambiance, food and service your potential patrons enjoy and may also inspire an attractive and potentially profitable concept. At each restaurant visited, you should record the following information:

- restaurant's name and address
- menu style
- entree price range
- hours of operation
- days open
- beverage service
- service style
- number of seats and
- special features, such as banquet rooms, lounge and entertainment.

The information collected may be formatted in a table. See the accompanying table for ideas.

At each restaurant visited, also note the food quality; service; and approximate age, income levels and ethnic backgrounds of patrons. Obtain a copy of each menu; the prices may be used as a guide when pricing your own menu. Also talk with the bartender while having a drink, with the server while dining or with local restaurant managers to learn their firsthand experiences in the local restaurant business.

Restaurant Feasibility Study Resources

Sources	*Available information*
1. Chamber of commerce, economic development authority or city planning office	• Population trends (historical and projected) • Age, occupation, income level, ethnic origin and marital status by census tract • Retail sales and food and beverage sales • Maps • Consumer shopping habits and patterns • Employment and unemployment statistics • Major employers and industries • Planned commercial, residential and industrial developments • Demographic and socio-economic trends • Area master plan
2. Housing and community development	• Residential occupancy and housing • Urban renewal projects • Property values
3. Building commission	• Building permits data • Planned construction developments
4. Zoning commission	• Planned uses for zoned areas • Building height, signage, parking and construction restrictions
5. Transportation department	• Road traffic patterns and counts • Proposed traffic developments • Types of public transportation and routes
6. Department of revenue	• Income and other related sales taxes • Real estate assessments
7. Convention and visitors bureau	• Number of visitors by month and spending habits/statistics • Conventions—size, type, frequency and duration • Recurring festivals and fairs
8. Utility companies	• Estimates of gas and/or electric expenses for the proposed restaurant
9. Local newspapers and magazines	• Restaurant critiques • Dining guides • Planned commercial developments

Day 2: data collection

On the second day, visit and interview the various agencies and organizations that you identified on the first day. Your objective for day two is to obtain both general and specific statistical and demographical data about the community. The information gathered is then used to construct a profile of your patrons. The prospective patrons' needs, desires and incomes will determine the menu and concept.

Information you will want to collect will include

- **housing data,** such as number of single and multi-units as well as owner-occupied versus renter-occupied units. Record the price ranges and approximate occupancy levels, if available. Also look for information on new residential developments that may affect your site.
- **transportation statistics,** especially traffic counts, new road construction and information on public transportation, such as the types available, the frequency, the hours and the proximity to your site.

• **industrial and commercial development,** which is a concrete indicator of the direction in which the community is headed. Increased commercial development leads to more people which, in turn, leads to a greater demand for restaurants. The economic development authority and area developers can provide information regarding existing developments and planned projects. They may also provide you with office building occupancy percentages and rental rates. Higher rental rates usually indicate that the tenants have higher incomes and can afford to spend more on dining.

• **recreational activities and recurring events,** such as festivals and fairs. Each event's size and proximity to the proposed restaurant will determine its possible effects.

While gathering the demographic and economic facts and figures, ask people at the various organizations where they eat and what restaurants they enjoy. You may discover additional local preferences.

All statistical information, such as income levels and population levels, should include a trend analysis with comparisons to state and national averages. A trend analysis is necessary to determine the area's economic growth pattern.

It is important to remember, however, that while general area statistics and information are needed, information on the proposed restaurant's primary market area is more important. You can use census statistics, which are segmented by *tracts*—defined areas within communities. Computer services also are available that can give you most of the statistical information you may need. They can even give you information on odd-shaped market areas that don't fall within specific census tracts.

Day 3: primary demand analysis

On day three, finish any leftover business from previous days. Once this is accomplished, you should analyze the primary demand for restaurants by talking to the people who frequent your prospective competition. A scientific approach would be to hire a marketing or consulting firm to survey area residents, influential executives and patrons of competitive restaurants. But you can also proceed on your own. While dining at competitive establishments, initiate conversations with other patrons. You could also interview key personnel from local offices to find out where they dine and why.

What you want to learn from this survey includes

• patrons' dining frequency

• dollars spent on each dining-out occasion

How To Design A Menu

Before you begin

Before you design your menu, consider

• *Physical facilities:* How much space have you allocated to the kitchen? Is the proposed equipment conducive to producing the selected menu items in an efficient manner?

• *Labor capabilities:* Do you have qualified staff to produce your chosen menu items?

• *Food and beverage products:* Are the raw products you need available at a reasonable cost throughout the year? Do the menu items complement each other by providing a variety of shapes, sizes, colors, textures and flavors?

• *Nutritional needs:* Do your prospective patrons have specific dietary requirements? Does your menu reflect the general trend towards nutritious dining?

Designing the menu

Developing a generic menu . . .

The generic menu is the basic framework for the menu. It should provide a balance and variety of food items. Specify the menu items required for each broad food category, such as appetizers, salads, entrees and desserts. For example, you may have 12 entree selections, 10 of them hot and two of them cold. The hot items might include two shellfish dishes, two fish dishes, two beef dishes, three poultry dishes and one veal dish. The cold entrees might be salads.

Developing, testing and perfecting the menu . . .

Once you have the generic menu, the next step is to refine it. Based on concept and patron preferences, research menu ideas from menu cookbooks and industry periodicals and draw on your own personal experiences. This will enable you to expand the generic menu into a descriptive one. For example, the two shellfish items on the generic menu may become a seafood medley in puff pastry with basil sauce and stir-fried shrimp and scallops with fresh vegetables.

Next it is important to test the recipes you select in an environment as similar to a commercial kitchen as possible. While preparing the items, observe the skill required, the preparation time, the holding period, the item's yield and the overall appearance and taste. The recipes may require several modifications.

In addition to testing the recipes, you need to design plate presentations, garnishes and accompaniments. Once the testing is complete and inappropriate recipes have been deleted, the recipes should be standardized. Standardized recipes provide you with a proper tool to maintain consistent quality, control cost through portion size specification and calculate recipe food costs.

After the recipes are developed, conduct a tasting session to further evaluate the proposed menu. Your objective for the taste test should be

1. to evaluate food quality, taste and presentation
2. to compare commercial pre-made products to items prepared on-premise
3. to determine each item's suitability for your prospective patrons, including the appropriate portion size and
4. to assist in determining purchase specifications.

Preparing, plating and photographing presentations . . .

Once all recipes have been developed, tested and perfected, the items should be prepared, plated and photographed for presentation. The pictures ensure that service and production personnel will know exactly how each plate should look. Portioning instructions should accompany the pictures to describe the procedures for assembling the items and the exact portion sizes.

—Food Design Workshop

- favorite area restaurants
- preferred/popular foods and beverages
- distance traveled to dine out
- reasons for dining at specific area restaurants
- type of person who eats out
- competitive restaurants
- strengths and weaknesses of area restaurants
- where patrons come from to dine at area restaurants and
- where patrons go after dining at area restaurants.

Day 4: regroup and evaluate

By day four you should be familiar enough with the market area to determine who your patrons may be and what competition you may face. Based on your findings, you should be considering possible concepts. If you cannot envision what concept may work, you need to regroup and pinpoint areas of missing information. If you are unaware of concepts or menu trends that would be attractive, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) markets several consumer research publications that may help, such as "How Consumers Make the Decision to Dine Out." In addition, many major trade publications regularly detail survey findings regarding consumer preferences. These general trends, of course, need to be tailored to your area.

Do not move ahead unless you have completed all tasks from day one through day four.

Day 5: concept formulation and menu development

Your attention should now turn toward developing a concept and menu for your restaurant. Some of the basic elements in this process will be your

restaurant's name—Because a restaurant's name sets the tone for the entire operation, it should be appealing to your prospective clientele. For a recent article on name selection, refer to the February 1985 issue of the ***NRA NEWS***.

number of seats—Although local zoning and building codes determine a freestanding building's maximum size, the configuration of the space depends upon the chosen concept. General guidelines call for allocation of one-half the space for seating areas, including dining and bar seating, and the other half for all support areas, including the kitchen, rest rooms, storage areas, utility rooms and offices. General space allocation rules of thumb range from 12 square feet per seat for fast service eateries and 18 or more square feet per seat for speciality restaurants.

menu style—The selected menu concept depends on elements that range from the expected clientele to the staff's capabilities. For further information see the accompanying sidebar "How to design a menu."

entree price range—Refer to the menus you have collected to competitively price your entrees. Other considerations include cost of goods, labor costs and the price required to generate a profit.

days and hours of operation—These depend on both the identified competition and your patrons' needs.

service style—Service styles range from the flair of tableside cookery to the efficiency of fast food service. The selected style will affect your labor costs, average checks and seat turnover. Leisurely waiter/waitress service will generate a greater labor cost than a self-service buffet, but a greater average check per guest may justify it.

ambiance—The spatial configuration, lighting, surface finishes, furnishings, tabletop appointments, graphics and art all combine to create your specific image. Each selected design ingredient should strengthen the concept without overpowering it.

entertainment—You may want to feature entertainment to complement the concept. It may even be a necessity to compete with other restaurants.

Day 6: financial feasibility

The restaurant's financial feasibility analysis comes next. It is based on the feasibility study and concept development completed on days one through five. To develop the analysis, you will need to know

- number of seats in each area (bar, dining room)
- hours of operation (for each area, each day of the week)
- opening date
- average food and beverage check per guest
- number of turns (ratio of total covers to total available seats for each food and beverage area)
- operating cost data
- locally assessed expenses, such as real estate taxes and
- chosen concept criteria and menu.

The first three items listed are relatively fixed, but the average food and beverage check and the number of seat turns will vary by the hour or service period, day and season.

The market data collected and observations made in competitive restaurants will assist you in forecasting the average food and beverage checks and turnovers. Calculate gross sales by multiplying projected average checks by the seat turnovers. This should be done for each typical week, month or season and totaled for the year's sales. Typically, financial projections should be prepared for the first three fiscal years of operation since longer projections are very uncertain.

After projecting sales, you can use either industry averages or your own experiences to estimate the operating expenses. Industry averages are available in NRA's *Annual Restaurant Industry Operations Report* which delineates restaurant operating expenses by region, menu theme, years in business, location and type of restaurant. Also, the ***NRA NEWS*** regularly provides updates on revenue and expense trends by region for the nation. Depreciation and loan amortization expense should also be projected. Keep in mind that the projected expense levels are directly related to your selected concept. Continually focus on your concept while projecting anticipated expenses.

Day 7: wrap up and plan the next stages

If your research and activities over the last several days have proven successful, you should now have a feasible restaurant concept. To proceed from here, you will need professional services to assist you, including those of an architect, foodservice consultant, interior designer, graphics designer, accountant and lawyer, among others to refine the concept and project the capital investment, facilities and manpower requirements for successfully creating your restaurant. How you will finance the restaurant will be of paramount concern.

The planning team and restaurant financing will be the focus of the next two articles in this series. ❑

CREATING RESTAURANT/CATERING COMBOS THAT MESH

by Toni Lydecker

The well-established New York City catering firm Glorious Food, Inc. recently opened a restaurant in Washington, DC, called Glorious Cafe.

A well-established restaurant in Washington, DC, had a problem. Although Le Souperb did a booming business at lunch and dinner, the kitchen stood virtually empty most of the afternoon.

• Two of Raindancer's youngest, most talented chefs stopped by to see Bill Skaggs, Jr., co-owner of the Rockville, MD, restaurant. They asked for more money and more opportunity to develop new skills.

• The Harmony Inn, Lancaster, PA, does a booming business when the weather is beautiful and tourists come to town, but during the off-season, business drops off.

Although these problems appear to be different, they all have one solution—starting an off-premise catering operation.

Benefits of catering . . .

Off-premise catering can push sales figures up without adding a single extra seat to the dining room. Many normal costs of starting a catering business are absorbed by the restaurant. Layne Milowe, co-owner of Swan Caterers, cites some advantages of sharing facilities with Le Souperb: "Basically, it cuts out most of the overhead. The restaurant has to pay rent and utilities anyway. As a result, customers are often surprised by the low prices we're able to offer."

By reducing turnover and improving morale, off-premise catering can also benefit the restaurant whose employees are restless for new challenges. Chefs get a chance to make fancy hors d'oeuvres and create centerpieces, and serving staff enjoy working in a different setting.

For some staff, the payoff may be even more tangible. David Haines, owner of Harmony Inn, has promoted several servers to catering coodinators. By setting up his catering operation as a separate corporation, restaurateur Richard Perry of St. Louis, MO, was able to bring in his chef as a partner.

The restaurant whose business ranges from slow to brisk, depending on the hour, day or season, can help smooth out the fluctuations by doing some off-premise catering. A lackluster Tuesday in the restaurant dining room can turn into gold on the balance sheet if a catered event for 500 people is on the schedule.

Beyond the measurable benefits of doing off-premise catering, many restaurateurs simply believe in diversification as a sound business tactic. The Baking Company, Omaha, NE, attracts customers several different ways by running a restaurant, catering operation, bakery and gourmet deli on the same premises. When dine-in business is down, the other enterprises may be bustling.

Sidestep the pitfalls . . .

Restaurants often back into off-premise catering. At the request of customers, such a restaurant may begin catering just one or two specialties; before long, it is handling several catered events a week.

But because catering draws on the same staff and facilities used for regular service, the owner may have to

turn down larger, more profitable jobs or risk hurting the restaurant. Also, a small-scale operation may be equipped only to offer food, thereby missing out on high-profit services provided by a full-line caterer; these include liquor, party planning and tableware rental. Should a restaurant in this situation expand?

At the other extreme, a restaurant may decide to hit the off-premise catering market full force, hiring separate staff and building a special catering kitchen. Although this restaurant has greater capabilities than one that backs into catering, it has incurred certain risks. Building a clientele will require time, and the restaurant has foregone the financial benefits of pooling resources for dine-in and catering business. Is the catering venture likely to increase profitability?

"In these times, it's not enough for a restaurant to do just one thing well."

These two examples show the hard business decisions restaurant owners must make when starting an off-premise catering operation. In determining the nature and extent of their involvement, they should consider the drawbacks as well as the benefits.

According to one consultant, restaurateurs have a problem "sorting fantasy from reality" in thinking about catering. They may see its potential as a profit center without realizing the special problems—ranging from spoiled food to blown fuses—that can occur.

Restaurateurs may also underestimate the amount of money that must be invested in equipment and other accessories to compete successfully with full-service caterers. "I didn't make a nickel on catering for the first three or four years because all my profits went into holding cabinets and other portable equipment. And there's no limit to the amount of china and silver you can use at a big party," says Ren Reid, owner of the Queen Bee Eating Place and Catering Service, Alice, TX.

Accounting systems may camouflage the real costs of a catering operation if they reflect only labor done at the party site, not preparation and cleanup handled at the restaurant. To determine whether the catering operation is holding its own, careful records on the allocation of staff time must be maintained. During the start-up period, managers should also itemize food costs for the catering operation—even ordering some ingredients from different distributors.

When caterers open restaurants . . .

A restaurant owner may encounter problems in starting an off-premise catering operation, but the caterer who decides to open a restaurant enters even more perilous territory. A major obstacle, of course, is money—according to one expert, even a caterer grossing $2 million in annual sales could lack sufficient capital.

After establishing a small but prosperous catering firm in Clarkesville, MD, Marie Louise Rehm and her husband set out to fulfill a lifelong dream of owning a restaurant. Unexpected problems cropped up almost immediately. Located in an unattractive office building with a poorly lighted parking lot, the restaurant pulled very little dinner business. Lease and management problems also contributed to the Rehms' eventual decision to close the restaurant.

A large, well-established caterer, such as New York City's Glorious Food, Inc., has a better chance of beating the success odds. In addition, the firm is known for a best-selling cookbook. Based on this track record Glorious Food recently opened Glorious Cafe in Washington.

The transition from catering to the restaurant business can be made with few resources if the entrepreneur has something unique to offer. Consider the story of Leeann Chin, who emigrated from Hong Kong to Minnetonka, MN, during the 1950s. As a dressmaker, she frequently invited customers to lunch. They encouraged her to write a cookbook, teach cooking and start a catering business.

The next step was a restaurant, financed by the Small Business Administration (SBA) and prominent supporters—among them actor Sean Connery and Carl Pohlad, owner of the Minnesota Twins baseball team. After building a three-restaurant chain with sales totaling $5 million, Chin sold the business to General Mills. The company plans to establish Leeann Chin's Restaurant as a national chain, with Chin at the helm.

Menu planning is crucial . . .

What a restaurant features on its menus is an extremely important decision. Leeann Chin, for example, attributes much of her success to a Cantonese buffet format, for both her restaurants and catered functions. For $11.95 a plate, guests dine on three appetizers, three entrees, fried rice and Chinese salad. The selection of dishes changes frequently, depending on what produce is in season.

Chin has found that the buffet concept minimizes labor costs, turns over seats quickly and facilitates adjusting the menu to take advantage of wholesale food costs. Other operators prefer to use different menus for restaurant and catering customers.

Richard Perry describes the balance he has found: "Our catering menu is nice but not as elaborate as the restaurant menu. For convenience, we tend to serve more room-temperature items." For Ambrosia Restaurant and Catering in Bowling Green, KY, the situation is reversed. Simple salads and sandwiches predominate in the restaurant, while the catering operation serves anything from formal, six-course meals to casual buffets.

"Restaurateurs can have a problem 'sorting fantasy from reality'".

A great disparity between restaurant and catering menus can cause misunderstandings. For example, owners worried that customers might confuse the capabilities of Le Souperb with the catering business run under its auspices. "We didn't want people thinking soup and corned beef—which is what the restaurant is known for—when we're equally prepared to cater shrimp mousse and artichoke bottoms," says Layne Milowe. A different name, Swan Caterers, helped distance the new enterprise from the restaurant.

A restaurateur new to catering learns quickly that written menus are of limited usefulness. Whereas the restaurant customer glances over the menu and says, "I'll have the roast veal, please," the food for a catered function becomes part of a complex negotiation.

Sean Driscoll, owner of Glorious Food, Inc., describes the process. "I

meet the customer at the party site, and we begin talking about the likes and dislikes. Little by little, we negotiate the menu, style and price for the function they want. Everything, including the food, is customized."

Smaller operations may use no menu at all for catered functions. Others like to give customers a list of sample menus. A good format for this purpose is a folder containing several pages for service or menu categories; a tab on each page allows the customer to pull out the information on "buffets" or "vegetarian selections."

Co-existing—peacefully—in the same kitchen . . .

Some operators build separate kitchens for their catering and restaurant services to avoid chaos or taxing equipment already used at maximum capacity. Others, however, find that the benefits of sharing facilities far outweigh the disadvantages. Here's how they cope.

1. Careful scheduling. When peak times for preparing catered and restaurant food coincide, tensions can build. Catering requests should be refused if they will lead to such a clash in priorities. Many restaurants have a period of kitchen downtime in early to mid-afternoon; catering staff can be scheduled to do the bulk of preparation during these hours.

2. Helping each other out. Even when staff are assigned specifically to catering or restaurant service, there are times when trading off jobs makes sense. If 20 salads are needed for a catering job, an employee can easily make them up while chopping ingredients for the salad bar.

3. Sharing ingredients. The catering and restaurant operations can use some of the same basic foods, even when their preparations are quite different; beef tenderloin could be served whole for a catered affair and made into Beef Wellington in the restaurant. This strategy reduces the risk of ordering too much or too little.

"Catering and restaurants have a lot in common. If you can master one, there's no reason not to move into the other."

Organizing the staff . . .

When a restaurant manager is out, the assistant manager or bartender fills in. No problem.

This smooth chain of command may not work nearly as well for a catering operation, however. Because a catered function usually involves intensive, one-to-one consultation with the customer, the same manager must sell and supervise a party.

As one caterer says, "When the client who's booked a $10,000 wedding has a problem, she doesn't want to be fobbed off on some manager she's never met. She wants to talk to you—the person who sold her the party."

Customers also like their key contact to show up at the party, at least for a few minutes, a requirement that may limit the number of functions scheduled for the same time period.

Larger restaurant/catering operations may have catering directors and other executive staff whose responsibilities are limited to selling and over-

(continued after Seminar Schedule . . .)

On the road with Yellowstone Kelly's

Yellowstone Kelly's mobile kitchen spends much of the year rolling down the highways of six western states, but what it serves at the final destination does not fit the usual definition of road food.

At a remote mine site in the Wyoming flats, the company might serve visiting company officials a multi-course dinner, complete with wine stewards and formal table service. A casual barbecue, on the other hand, is likely to call for pitchfork fondue. To eat this delicacy, guests spear a strip steak with a pitchfork, then plunge it into beef suet heated in a cauldron over a charcoal fire.

As a restaurant/catering operation, Yellowstone Kelly's is also a one-of-a-kind species. Claiming to be the only off-premise caterer north of Denver, the company clocks 30,000 miles a year to reach customers in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

The base of operations is Billings, MT, where the company owns a restaurant. In most operations, catering plays second fiddle to the restaurant, which represents a larger capital investment—but the reverse is true for Yellowstone Kelly's. The company's main objective in acquiring the restaurant was the use of its large, commissary-type kitchen as support for mobile catering units. In addition to providing storage for supplies, the restaurant kitchen handles initial prep work for catering jobs.

If you ever catch up with Yellowstone Kelly's on the road, you'll know it. The company's caravan includes a 50-foot, fully equipped mobile kitchen; a 15-foot barbecue wagon capable of cooking 300 steaks or 600 hamburgers at once; and a van containing tents, tables and other catering paraphernalia.

It's an elaborate setup by necessity. In isolated areas, there's no question of finding substitutes for items left behind. But the team's biggest fear, says owner John Clawson, is not forgetting the mustard or the napkins. It's breaking an axle on a little-travelled back road or running out of fresh water.

Meals range in price from $3 to $150 per person. Because customers must pay the company's transportation costs, they often schedule two or three functions end to end. For example, Yellowstone Kelly's might roast a pig, with all the trimmings, for participants in a power plant dedication. The next day, they may be on hand to cater an employee picnic.

Except for the Christmas season, the catering business in far-flung locations is slow during the winter. So Yellowstone Kelly's emphasis shifts to Billings to fill in the slack.

National Restaurant Association
Education Programs

July–December 1985

The National Restaurant Association is pleased to present its July—December 1985 Education Programs Schedule. Again, we have listed our programs three ways: by category, by date and by location. This will make it easier for you to decide which courses best suit your needs.

In our Basic Foodservice Series, we include fundamental educational programs that are most needed by a majority of the industry. In the Food Production Series, we offer both elementary and more advanced food preparation seminars and workshops. The Foodservice Management Series is generally designed to suit the needs of a more advanced or specialized audience.

Whichever category or course you choose, you will be aware of NRA's fundamental commitment to quality.

SEMINARS BY TOPIC

BASIC FOODSERVICE COURSES

Basic Supervision in Foodservice

7/17	Memphis, TN
8/5	Portland, OR
8/14	Jackson, MS
11/12	Savannah, GA
12/3	San Jose, CA

Dining Room Management

7/9	Irvine, CA
7/30	Atlanta, GA
8/14	Denver, CO
8/21	Virginia Beach, VA
9/4	Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
9/16	Las Vegas, NV
9/24	Burlington, VT
10/8	Bloomington, MN
10/22	Madison, WI
11/4	St. Louis, MO
11/13	Portland, ME
11/18	Billings, MT
11/20	Seattle, WA
12/3	Tampa, FL
12/5	Philadelphia, PA
12/10	Albuquerque, NM

Kitchen Management

7/9	Charleston, WV
8/7	Boston, MA
9/10	Charlotte, NC
9/12	Birmingham, AL
9/17	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
10/1	Wilmington, DE
10/22	Colorado Springs, CO
10/24	Eugene, OR
12/10	Davenport, IA
12/12	Cheyenne, WY

People-power and Profits

7/15	Newark, NJ
7/17	Portsmouth, NH
9/12	Tucson, AZ
10/10	Falmouth, MA
11/21	Knoxville, TN

Tools for Training

7/9	Phoenix, AZ
8/13	Tulsa, OK
9/4	Minneapolis, MN
9/18	Columbia, SC
10/24	Kansas City, MO
11/7	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
11/19	Honolulu, HI
12/9	Columbus, OH

FOOD PRODUCTION COURSES

Creative Buffets

7/15	Louisville, KY
9/9	Atlantic City, NJ
9/10	Newport, RI
10/10	Arlington, VA
10/17	Indianapolis, IN
11/18	Chicago, IL

The Pantry: Prep for Profit

8/1	Hartford, CT
8/15	Philadelphia, PA
9/11	Columbus, OH
9/25	Alexandria, VA
12/3	Atlanta, GA

Perfecting Your Culinary Skills

7/30	Cleveland, OH
8/22	Baltimore, MD
9/10	Atlantic City, NJ
9/26	Austin, TX
10/22	Boise, ID
10/24	Spokane, WA
11/7	Omaha, NE

Simplified Baking Workshop

8/13	Hyde Park, NY
9/17	San Diego, CA
9/19	Sacramento, CA
11/12	Boston, MA
11/14	Philadelphia, PA

Soups & Sauces

8/5	Detroit, MI
10/15	Baltimore, MD
10/16	Williamsburg, VA
10/28	Burlington, VT
10/29	Pittsburgh, PA
11/14	Portland, OR

FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COURSES

Banquet Management

9/10	Atlantic City, NJ
9/16	Washington, DC
10/3	Chicago, IL
11/12	Raleigh, NC

Computers in Foodservice: A Primer

7/11	Portland, OR
7/23	San Jose, CA
8/13	Milwaukee, WI
9/23	Little Rock, AR
10/22	Oklahoma City, OK
12/2	Rochester, NY

Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology

7/22	Seattle, WA
8/5	San Jose, CA
8/14	Milwaukee, WI
9/10	Detroit, MI
10/23	Oklahoma City, OK

Employee Motivation

9/9	Owensboro, KY
9/11	Kansas City, MO
10/8	Salt Lake City, UT
10/27	Wichita, KS
11/13	Grand Rapids, MI
12/4	Rutland, VT

Food Cost Management

7/15	Sarasota, FL
8/12	Vienna, VA
9/9	Atlantic City, NJ
9/23	Denver, CO
9/30	Baltimore, MD
10/21	Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
12/2	Dallas, TX
12/9	Las Vegas, NV

As you review the schedule, you will note the addition of several new courses: *Banquet Management, Creative Buffets* and *Employee Motivation*. As our industry evolves, NRA will continue to help you prepare for changes and trends through new educational programs. Each new program is developed at the request of NRA members. Each is specifically tailored to meet your needs as you strive to keep pace with the dynamics of the foodservice marketplace.

Also outlined in this schedule is the NRA's 1985-86 National Conference Series. The standards we have set for these conferences reflects the association's efforts to maintain high standards throughtout its activities. We suggest you review the topics, and plan to attend the National Conferences which best fit your educational needs.

Menu Development

7/23	Madison, WI
7/25	Saginaw, MI
8/20	St. Louis, MO
9/17	Atlanta, GA
9/25	Shreveport, LA
10/14	Louisville, KY
10/15	Nashville, TN
11/19	Concord, NH

Off-Premise Catering

9/4–5	Seattle, WA
9/9–10	Newton, MA
10/22–23	Minneapolis, MN
10/28–29	San Diego, CA
11/20–21	Richmond, VA
12/2–3	Lexington, KY

Operational Analysis

8/20–21	Denver, CO
9/18–19	Baltimore, MD
10/7–8	Detroit, MI
10/28–29	San Antonio, TX

Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy

7/10–11	New Orleans, LA
8/7–8	Pittsburgh, PA
9/9–10	Atlantic City, NJ
9/25–26	Milwaukee, WI
10/8–9	Westchester, NY
11/20–21	Los Angeles, CA
12/4–5	Salt Lake City, UT

Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection

9/16–17	Jacksonville, FL
10/2–3	Washington, DC
10/21–22	Boston, MA

Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning

8/28–29	Houston, TX
10/30–31	Cincinnati, OH
12/11–12	Seattle, WA

National Conferences

National Conference on Marketing, Advertising and Promotions
8/25–28 Chicago, IL

Tenth Annual California Wine Workshop
9/20—25 Napa Valley, CA

National Conference on Catering
11/10–13 Las Vegas, NV

INFO 86: Independent Operators National Conference
2/16–19/86 Orlando, FL

National Conference on Computers
3/16–19/86 Washington, DC

SEMINARS BY STATE

ALABAMA

9/12	Kitchen Management	Birmingham

ARIZONA

7/9	Tools for Training	Phoenix
9/12	People-power and Profits	Tucson

ARKANSAS

9/23	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Little Rock

CALIFORNIA

7/9	Dining Room Management	Irvine
7/23	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	San Jose
8/6	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	San Jose
9/17	Simplified Baking Workshop	San Diego
9/19	Simplified Baking Workshop	Sacramento
9/20–25	**Tenth Annual California Wine Workshop**	**Napa Valley**
10/28–29	Off-Premise Catering	San Diego
11/20–21	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Los Angeles
12/3	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	San Jose

COLORADO

8/14	Dining Room Management	Denver
8/20–21	Operational Analysis	Denver
9/23	Food Cost Management	Denver
10/22	Kitchen Management	Colorado Springs

CONNECTICUT

8/1	The Pastry Prep for Profit	Hartford

DELAWARE

10/1	Kitchen Management	Wilmington

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

8/12	Food Cost Management	Vienna
9/16	Banquet Management	Washington, DC
9/25	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Alexandria
10/2–3	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Washington, DC
10/10	Creative Buffets	Arlington
3/16–19/86	National Conference on Computers in Foodservice	Washington, DC

FLORIDA

7/15	Food Cost Management	Sarasota
9/16–17	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Jacksonville
12/3	Dining Room Management	Tampa
2/16–19/86	INFO 86: Independent Operators National Conference	Orlando

GEORGIA

7/30	Dining Room Management	Atlanta
9/17	Menu Development	Atlanta
11/12	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Savannah
12/3	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Atlanta

HAWAII

11/19	Tools for Training	Honolulu

IDAHO

10/22	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Boise

ILLINOIS

8/25–28	National Conference on Marketing, Advertising and Promotions	Chicago
10/3	Banquet Management	Chicago
11/18	Creative Buffets	Chicago

INDIANA

10/17	Creative Buffets	Indianapolis

IOWA

12/10	Kitchen Management	Davenport

KANSAS

10/27	Employee Motivation	Wichita

KENTUCKY

7/15	Creative Buffets	Louisville
9/9	Employee Motivation	Owensboro
10/14	Menu Development	Louisville
12/2–3	Off-Premise Catering	Lexington

LOUISIANA

7/10–11	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	New Orleans
9/25	Menu Development	Shreveport

MAINE

11/13	Dining Room Management	Portland

MARYLAND

9/22	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Baltimore
9/18–19	Operational Analysis	Baltimore
9/30	Food Cost Management	Baltimore
10/15	Soups & Sauces	Baltimore
		Baltimore

MASSACHUSETTS

8/7	Kitchen Management	Boston
9/9–10	Off-Premise Catering	Newton
10/10	People-power and Profits	Falmouth
10/21–22	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Boston
11/12	Simplified Baking Workshops	Boston

MICHIGAN

7/25	Menu Development	Southfield
8/6	Soups and Sauces	Detroit
9/10	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Techniques	Detroit
10/7–8	Operational Analysis	Detroit
11/13	Employee Motivation	Grand Rapids

MINNESOTA

9/4	Tools for Training	Minneapolis
10/8	Dining Room Management	Bloomington
10/22–23	Off-Premise Catering	Minneapolis

MISSISSIPPI

9/14	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Jackson

MISSOURI

8/26	Menu Development	St. Louis
9/12	Employee Motivation	Kansas City
10/24	Tools for Training	Kansas City
11/4	Dining Room Management	St. Louis

MONTANA

11/18	Dining Room Management	Billings

NEBRASKA

11/7	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Omaha

NEVADA

9/16	Dining Room Management	Las Vegas
11/10–13	National Conference on Catering	Las Vegas
12/9	Food Cost Management	Las Vegas

NEW HAMPSHIRE

7/17	People-power and Profits	Portsmouth
11/19	Menu Development	Concord

NEW JERSEY

7/15	People-power and Profits	Newark
9/9	Food Cost Management	Atlantic City
9/9	Creative Buffets	Atlantic City

9/9-10	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Atlantic City
9/10	Banquet Management	Atlantic City
9/10	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Atlantic City

NEW MEXICO

12/10	Dining Room Management	Albuquerque

NEW YORK

8/13	Simplified Baking Workshop	Hyde Park
10/8-9	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Westchester
12/2	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Rochester

NORTH CAROLINA

9/10	Kitchen Management	Charlotte
11/12	Banquet Management	Raleigh

OHIO

7/30	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Cleveland
9/11	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Columbus
10/30-31	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Cincinnati
12/9	Tools for Training	Columbus

OKLAHOMA

8/13	Tools for Training	Tulsa
10/22	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Oklahoma City
10/23	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Oklahoma City

OREGON

7/11	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Portland
8/5	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Portland
10/24	Kitchen Management	Eugene
11/14	Soups & Sauces	Portland

PENNSYLVANIA

8/6-8	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Pittsburgh
8/15	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Philadelphia
10/29	Soups & Sauces	Pittsburgh
11/14	Simplified Baking Workshop	Philadelphia
12/5	Dining Room Management	Philadelphia

RHODE ISLAND

9/19	Creative Buffets	Newport

SOUTH CAROLINA

9/18	Tools for Training	Columbia

TENNESSEE

7/17	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Memphis
10/15	Menu Development	Nashville
11/21	People-power and Profits	Knoxville

TEXAS

8/28-29	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Houston
9/26	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Austin
10/28-29	Operational Analysis	San Antonio
12/2	Food Cost Management	Dallas

UTAH

10/8	Employee Motivation	Salt Lake City
12/4-5	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Salt Lake City

VERMONT

9/24	Dining Room Management	Burlington
10/28	Soups & Sauces	Burlington
12/4	Employee Motivation	Rutland

VIRGINIA

9/12	Food Cost Management	Vienna
9/21	Dining Room Management	Virginia Beach
9/25	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Alexandria
10/10	Creative Buffets	Arlington
10/16	Soups & Sauces	Williamsburg
11/20-21	Off-Premise Catering	Richmond

WASHINGTON

7/22	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Seattle
9/4-5	Off-Premise Catering	Seattle
10/21	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Spokane
11/20	Dining Room Management	Seattle
12/11-12	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Seattle

WEST VIRGINIA

7/9	Kitchen Management	Charleston

WISCONSIN

7/23	Menu Development	Madison
8/13	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Milwaukee
8/14	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Milwaukee
9/25-26	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Milwaukee
10/22	Dining Room Management	Madison

WYOMING

12/12	Kitchen Management	Cheyenne

CANADA

9/4	Dining Room Management	Winnipeg, Manitoba
9/17	Kitchen Management	Toronto, Ontario
10/21	Food Cost Management	Ottawa, Ontario
11/7	Tools for Training	Toronto, Ontario

SEMINARS BY MONTH

JULY

7/9	Tools for Training	Phoenix, AZ
7/9	Kitchen Management	Charleston, WV
7/9	Dining Room Management	Irvine, CA
7/10–11	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	New Orleans, LA
7/11	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Portland, OR
7/15	Creative Buffets	Louisville, KY
7/15	People-power & Profits	Newark, NJ
7/15	Food Cost Management	Sarasota, FL
7/17	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Memphis, TN
7/17	People-power & Profits	Portsmouth, NH
7/22	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Seattle, WA
7/23	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	San Jose, CA
7/23	Menu Development	Madison, WI
7/25	Menu Development	Saginaw, MI
7/30	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Cleveland, OH
7/30	Dining Room Management	Atlanta, GA

AUGUST

8/1	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Hartford, CT
8/5	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	San Jose, CA
8/5	Soups & Sauces	Detroit, MI
8/5	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Portland, OR
8/7	Kitchen Management	Boston, MA
8/7–8	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Pittsburgh, PA
8/12	Food Cost Management	Vienna, VA
8/13	Simplified Baking Workshop	Hyde Park, NY
8/13	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Milwaukee, WI
8/13	Tools for Training	Tulsa, OK
8/14	Dining Room Management	Denver, CO
8/14	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Jackson, MS
8/14	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Milwaukee, WI
8/15	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Philadelphia, PA
8/20	Menu Development	St. Louis, MO
8/20–21	Operational Analysis	Denver, CO
8/21	Dining Room Management	Virginia Beach, VA
8/22	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Baltimore, MD
8/25–28	**National Conference on Marketing, Advertising and Promotions**	**Chicago, IL**
8/28–29	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Houston, TX

SEPTEMBER

9/4	Tools for Training	Minneapolis, MN
9/4–5	Off-Premise Catering	Seattle, WA
9/4	Dining Room Management	Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
9/9	Food Cost Management	Atlantic City, NJ
9/9	Creative Buffets	Atlantic City, NJ
9/9	Employee Motivation	Owensboro, KY
9/9–10	Off-Premise Catering	Newton, MA
9/9–10	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Atlantic City, NJ
9/10	Banquet Management	Atlantic City, NJ
9/10	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Atlantic City, NJ
9/10	Kitchen Management	Charlotte, NC
9/10	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Detroit, MI
9/11	Employee Motivation	Kansas City, MO
9/11	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Columbus, OH
9/12	Kitchen Management	Birmingham, AL
9/12	People-power & Profits	Tucson, AZ
9/16	Dining Room Management	Las Vegas, NV
9/16	Banquet Management	Washington, DC
9/16–17	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Jacksonville, FL
9/17	Simplified Baking Workshop	San Diego, CA
9/17	Kitchen Management	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
9/17	Menu Development	Atlanta, GA
9/18	Tools for Training	Columbia, SC
9/18–19	Operational Analysis	Baltimore, MD
9/19	Simplified Baking Workshop	Sacramento, CA
9/19	Creative Buffets	Newport, RI
9/20–25	**Tenth Annual California Wine Workshop**	**Napa Valley, CA**
9/23	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Little Rock, AR
9/23	Food Cost Management	Denver, CO
9/24	Dining Room Management	Burlington, VT
9/25	Menu Development	Shreveport, LA
9/25	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Alexandria, VA
9/25–26	Planning & Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Milwaukee, WI
9/26	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Austin, TX
9/30	Food Cost Management	Baltimore, MD

OCTOBER

10/1	Kitchen Management	Wilmington, DE
10/2–3	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Washington, DC
10/3	Banquet Management	Chicago, IL
10/7–8	Operational Analysis	Detroit, MI
10/8	Dining Room Management	Bloomington, MN
10/8	Employee Motivation	Salt Lake City, UT
10/8–9	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Westchester, NY
10/10	Creative Buffets	Arlington, VA
10/10	People-power & Profits	Falmouth, MA
10/14	Menu Development	Louisville, KY
10/15	Menu Development	Nashville, TN
10/15	Soups & Sauces	Baltimore, MD
10/16	Soups & Sauces	Williamsburg, VA
10/17	Creative Buffets	Indianapolis, IN
10/21	Food Cost Management	Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

10/21–22	Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection	Boston, MA
10/22	Dining Room Management	Madison, WI
10/22	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Oklahoma City, OK
10/22	Kitchen Management	Colorado Springs, CO
10/22	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Boise, ID
10/22–23	Off-Premise Catering	Minneapolis, MN
10/23	Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology	Oklahoma City, OK
10/24	Tools for Training	Kansas City, MO
10/24	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Spokane, WA
10/24	Kitchen Management	Eugene, OR
10/27	Employee Motivation	Wichita, KS
10/28	Soups & Sauces	Burlington, VT
10/28–29	Operational Analysis	San Antonio, TX
10/28–29	Off-Premise Catering	San Diego, CA
10/29	Soups & Sauces	Pittsburgh, PA
10/30–31	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Cincinnati, OH

NOVEMBER

11/4	Dining Room Management	St. Louis, MO
11/7	Perfecting Your Culinary Skills	Omaha, NE
11/7	Tools for Training	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
11/10–13	**National Conference on Catering**	**Las Vegas, NV**
11/12	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	Savannah, GA
11/12	Banquet Management	Raleigh, NC
11/12	Simplified Baking Workshop	Boston, MA
11/13	Dining Room Management	Portland, ME
11/13	Employee Motivation	Grand Rapids, MI
11/14	Simplified Baking Workshop	Philadelphia, PA
11/14	Soups & Sauces	Portland, OR
11/18	Dining Room Management	Billings, MT
11/18	Creative Buffets	Chicago, IL
11/19	Menu Development	Concord, NH
11/19	Tools for Training	Honolulu, HI
11/20	Dining Room Management	Seattle, WA
11/20–21	Off-Premise Catering	Richmond, VA
11/20–21	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Los Angeles, CA
11/21	People-power & Profits	Knoxville, TN

DECEMBER

12/2–3	Off-Premise Catering	Lexington, KY
12/2	Computers in Foodservice: A Primer	Rochester, NY
12/2	Food Cost Management	Dallas, TX
12/3	Basic Supervision in Foodservice	San Jose, CA
12/3	The Pantry: Prep for Profit	Atlanta, GA
12/3	Dining Room Management	Tampa, FL
12/4	Employee Motivation	Rutland, VT
12/4–5	Planning and Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy	Salt Lake City, UT
12/5	Dining Room Management	Philadelphia, PA
12/9	Food Cost Management	Las Vegas, NV
12/9	Tools for Training	Columbus, OH
12/10	Kitchen Management	Davenport, IA
12/10	Dining Room Management	Albuquerque, NM
12/11–12	Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning	Seattle, WA
12/12	Kitchen Management	Cheyenne, WY

REGISTRATION Please print or type

For fast, easy registration call 800/424-5156 (toll free) or 202/638-6100

Seminar _____

Date and location _____

Name _____

Title _____

Name _____

Title _____

Seminar _____

Date and location _____

Name _____

Title _____

Name _____

Title _____

Company _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State _____

ZIP _____ Phone (___) _____

Basic Foodservice Courses

(No discount applies)

	Member*	Non-member
	$115	$145

Food Production Courses

Number of people attending from your organization	Member*	Non-member
One person	$145	$185
Two or more	$130 each	$170 each

Foodservice Management Courses

	Member*	Non-member
One-day seminars		
One person	$145	$185
Two or more	$130 each	$170 each
Two-day seminars		
One person	$310	$390
Two or more	$270 each	$350 each

*NRA or co-sponsoring state association

☐ NRA Member _____ Member #

☐ Co-sponsoring association member

☐ Check enclosed
Make checks payable to National Restaurant Association

☐ **Yes.** Send me information on the following seminars:

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Continuing education credit—The International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA), the Dietary Managers Association (DMA) and the American Culinary Federation (ACF) have approved NRA's courses for continuing education credit.

Tax deductible—Your attendance at this NRA seminar is tax deductible, according to Treasury Regulation 1.162-5.

Discount for multiple attendance—When two or more attendees register from the same company for selected programs, each will receive a discount off the regular registration fee. Special discounts available for larger groups.

Guarantee—If you are not satisfied that the knowledge gained at the seminar is useful and will help you to do a better job, we will give you a full refund of your entire seminar fee. If you should feel the need to request such a refund, please write within 10 days of your course attendance to: Larry Fidel, Education Programs, National Restaurant Association, 311 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

IN-HOUSE PROGRAMS

If you are a small to mid-sized, multi-unit operator of restaurants, hotels or fast food outlets, in-house seminar presentations are ideal for you. "Seminars to Go" is an economical and practical way to motivate your staff by showing you are concerned about their professional growth, not to mention the direct benefits your organization will derive from maintaining a well trained staff. Certainly one, or perhaps several of NRA's highly respected seminars will meet your training needs. For more information on "Seminars to Go" or on NRA presentations at your conferences and conventions, write or call Deborah Apolito in the Education Programs Department at (800)424-5156 or (202)638-6100.

REGISTRATION FEES

Basic Foodservice Courses

(No discount applies)

Member*	Non-member
$115	$145

Food Production Courses

Number of people attending from your organization	Member*	Non-member
One person	$145	$185
Two or more	$130 each	$170 each

Foodservice Management Courses

	Member*	Non-member
One-day seminars		
One person	$145	$185
Two or more	$130 each	$170 each
Two-day seminars		
One person	$310	$390
Two or more	$270 each	$360 each

Discount for multiple attendance—When two or more attendees register from the same company for selected programs, each will receive a discount off the regular registration fee. Special discounts available for larger groups.

*NRA or co-sponsoring state association

National Conferences

National Conference on Marketing, Advertising and Promotions
8/25–28 Chicago, IL

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9/20—25 Napa Valley, CA

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11/10–13 Las Vegas, NV

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2/16–19/86 Orlando, FL

National Conference on Computers
3/16–19/86 Washington, DC

Fast service restaurants can cater

Would you ask the Colonel to cater your wedding?

That's what happens approximately a hundred times each year in Omaha, NE. Chix Inc., the corporation that owns the franchise rights to all the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) operations in Omaha, caters not only weddings, but business, church and school functions as well.

"It all started 10 years ago," explains Greg Cutchall, Chix vice president. At that time, company executives perceived the potential of an untapped catering market.

"Our operations were always able to fill large orders but nothing was ever done on a formal basis to promote that end of the business," he maintains.

To begin, Chix developed point-of-sale brochures that were placed in all KFC locations and started a direct mail campaign aimed at area businesses and organizations. Because there was no overhead, the initial investment was very small.

The company produced a catering package complete with aluminum trays, napkins, forks, serving tongs and large spoons. It also decided to offer delivery service, although 60 percent of orders are picked up by the customer. And, for orders over $300, servers are available to assist with the event. Prices are quoted on a per meal basis. Every item is available to walk-in customers. On request, an item can be added, such as different kinds of salads or breads.

At present, the company caters 250 functions per month. And that includes weddings and anniversaries. "When we realized there was a market for these events, we developed high quality disposable products and eliminated the KFC logos," Cutchall explains. "The menu items remain the same, but the appearance of the food seems upscale." This setup can have great appeal for people who do not have a lot of money to spend. "By the way," he quips, "we don't put buckets on the table." On the contrary, food is arranged in serving trays, just as it would at any catered function.

An attractive feature of this service is its flexibility. Customers can cancel up to two hours before the event. "There is never any waste because all of the items can be distributed to other KFCs in the area," says Cutchall. "Or," he continues, "a customer can frantically call us at eight in the morning, and we can have a complete spread ready for 200 people by noon."

Will all fast service operations jump on the catering bandwagon? Cutchall predicts that catering in fast service restaurants may someday have a wider application. "But for now," he says, "very few items in fast food restaurants can withstand the holding time. Right now this service is limited to chicken or barbecued products."

As a matter of fact, one rib establishment has contacted Chix for advice on how to start up a catering operation. "Who knows?" wonders Cutchall. "Catering may one day become an integral part of the services offered by fast service establishments."

—Elyse Cuttler

seeing parties. In a smaller business, the owner/manager often becomes the principal contact.

An operation may hire separate chefs, servers and other staff for catering and restaurant service. More commonly, the same staff handle both ends of the business, an arrangement likely to create more interest and variety in their jobs—unless the volume of business is so great that they consistently feel overworked.

If this is true, the best option may be to treat catered functions as optional free-lance work that is offered first to permanent staff, then to others. Additional staff for catering are hired much the same way as temporary or seasonal workers; keep a roster of trained personnel willing to work on call or engage staff through a temporary help agency or ads in newspapers.

If you do use temporary workers, make sure you always have written instructions, maps to functions, room layouts, on-site rehearsals and clearly defined dress codes and behavior standards, suggests Richard DeSantis of Guest Services in Fairfax, VA. "Being in the catering business is like being in a field drill. You cannot be unprepared."

Your marketing strategy . . .

Most catering jobs are born of previous catering jobs. "Every party we cater, we try to pick up another job," says restaurateur Ren Reid. But the word-of-mouth system can sometimes backfire. "You're only as good as your last party," warns Reid.

Each part of the restaurant/catering combo can help sell the other, particularly when the menus are similar.

Starting a catering business helped polish Harmony Inn's rather tarnished image, for instance. "When I bought the restaurant, its reputation was not the best, but I didn't want to change the name. Catering got us out into the community and helped spread the word that we had changed for the better," says David Haines.

In turn, the restaurant can help promote catering services. When the catering business is considered as important as regular restaurant services, it may even be advertised in the operation's name: The Queen Bee Eating Place and Catering Service is one example. At Raindancer, a sign in the restaurant lobby and an insert in the menu invite customers to drop by the new catering office next door.

Even when catering services are not marketed directly through the restaurant, an affiliation can be helpful. Customers who have never heard of Swan Caterers, which started only three years ago, are reassured to learn it is under the same management as Le Souperb, a well-known restaurant in business a dozen years.

Print and radio advertising that succeeds in drawing restaurant customers may be of surprisingly little value in promoting the catering operation. When aimed at business customers, personal visits by sales personnel and direct mail may be more useful in getting a new catering business started.

The combo can work . . .

Running a catering operation requires a different blend of management skills and creative flair than does running a restaurant. The operator who tries to impose exactly the same conceptual, staffing and marketing approaches on both is headed for trouble. With a little ingenuity, however, the two can mesh beautifully. ❑

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Anniversary celebrations reintroduce the restaurant to old customers and create renewed excitement.

by Kathy Boyle

On one evening of his restaurant's weeklong anniversary celebration, John Grisanti, owner of Grisanti's Restaurant in Memphis, TN, personally invited 10 of his best customers to a thank you dinner. He phoned them to let them know a chauffeured car would be by to pick them up. What Grisanti didn't tell them was that he had contacted the local antique car association, and the chauffeured vehicle was a vintage automobile. The longtime customers were charmed, even the couple who rode in the rumble seat.

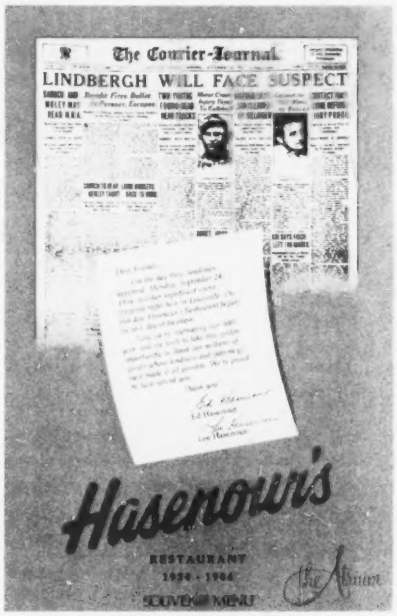
Whether it's a restaurant's first, fifth or 50th anniversary, most restaurateurs want to celebrate those cherished years with some sort of gala to share their pride with loyal customers. The creative ideas for how to celebrate are almost limitless. Here is an overview of some of them.

Price promotions . . .

The most widely used anniversary promotion is a price rollback to the restaurant's original prices. Restaurateurs caution, however, that it is a good idea to place very strict constraints on the rollback so that it will not be too much of a strain on the establishment's resources. Most establishments cut their prices for only one day or evening. For its 10th anniversary, the Pleasant Peasant Restaurants, headquartered in Atlanta, GA, turned back the clocks from 5:30 p.m. to midnight, serving the original menu at the original prices.

For its 1909 night, Grisanti's Restaurants took the regular menu, scratched out the prices and penned in prices from the turn of the century. "We made coffee five cents, reduced an $8.00 dinner to $1.25 and offered spaghetti at 50 cents a plate," tells John Grisanti.

Don's Chuck Wagon in East Detroit, MI, featured a 15-cent hamburger for its 38th anniversary celebration. Customers were free to buy as many as they wanted. "People were ordering six hamburgers and then couldn't eat them," recalls



owner Don Rucinski. "This past year we ran a beverage and hamburger special at a reduced price for our anniversary, but this time we set a one-to-a-customer limit."

Other establishments, such as Hasenour's Restaurant in Louisville, KY, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, created a special discounted dinner. At Hasenour's the dinner for two (with a choice of either beef tenderloin or Cornish hen) was $19.34, commemorating the year of the restaurant's founding—1934. In addition to the dinner special, Hasenour's put a bottle of champagne on each table at a very attractive price—$8.00—which included the champagne and two commemorative 50th anniversary glasses to keep.

According to Lee Hasenour, son of the restaurant's founder Ed Hasenour (still active in the business), "The weeklong dinner special was almost a giveaway at that price. I'd say we just about broke even on it."

Commemorative menus . . .

Designing a special menu for anniversary celebrations is also popular with operators. When El Torito's celebrated its 30th anniversary in 1983, it introduced a range of Mexican regional specialties that were quite different from the familiar Sonora style cuisine. To highlight the new items, El Torito's designed a colorful anniversary menu, depicting stylized scenes of various regions of Mexico.

Another idea is to create a menu

L'Escargot celebrated its anniversary with a three-legs-in-a-dry-sack race.

cover from the news stories of a particular anniversary year era.

Creating new menu items . . .

Launching new menu items on an anniversary can also be an effective way to tell customers that an establishment is enduring. As part of T.G.I. Friday's 20th anniversary celebration, the chain introduced three new menu items: gourmet chicken sandwiches, gourmet potato skins and Flings, a selection of non-alcoholic drinks. One of Friday's 11 new varieties of gourmet chicken sandwiches is Miami Chicken, created by Friday's bartender Arianne Pennington and named after her hometown in Florida.

The Flings drinks are Friday's second line of non-alcoholic beverages (the first major line, Smoothies, was created during the 1984 Summer Olympics). There are five Flings drinks. They are mixed with fresh fruit juices and naturally flavored sparkling waters, and are then blended and poured over ice.

To celebrate its golden anniversary, Ernie's Restaurant in San Francisco, CA, also expanded its already extensive wine list. More than two dozen vintages and varietals were added. Ernie's hosted a special tour of the wine cellar and held a press luncheon to introduce the new selections.

Bringing back an old-time favorite can also build excitement. McDonald's, now celebrating its 30th anniversary, brought back the double cheeseburger systemwide for the duration of the celebration.

Contests . . .

Holding a contest is another way to draw attention to an upcoming anniversary. Hasenour's offered a Kruggerand (a one-ounce gold coin from the Republic of South Africa) during its golden anniversary celebration. To enter the 50-day contest, patrons simply dropped their business cards into a bowl. Hasenour used two different bowls, one for lunch business and one for dinner. "This way we were able to create separate lunch and dinner mailing lists," he notes. "Now we have a 10,000-name mailing list, which we never had before. Since the anniversary, we have cross-merchandised—sending flyers about our dinner specials to our luncheon customers and vice versa."

During its 20th anniversary festivities, the Plaza III Restaurant located in Kansas City's exclusive Country Club Plaza and modelled after the architectural style of Seville, Spain, ran a contest to guess how many champagne corks were in a jug. The best guesser won an all-expense-paid trip to Spain.

Extended celebrations . . .

Some operators like to extend the anniversary festivities over a period of a week or more. Celebrating their 75th anniversary was a labor of love for the Grisanti family of Memphis, TN. Planning began a few years ago for the weeklong celebration.

Festivities were kicked off on Sunday at a by-invitation-only cocktail party. Attendees included the mayor. Monday was memorabilia night. If guests brought an artifact from the Grisanti restaurant, such as old matchbooks or menus, they received a gift. For Tuesday's kids' night, the restaurant hired two clowns and bought helium balloons for all customers. Children were given goodie bags that included a Grisanti T-shirt and baseball cards. Wednesday night featured a price rollback to 1909, the year the restaurant was founded. On Thursday night any senior citizen accompanied by a relative was treated to a free dinner. On Friday night families were invited to have their picture taken with the Grisanti family. The finale on Saturday night was a traditional birthday party, complete with band and cakes, which were replicas of the original and newer Grisanti restaurants.

Throughout the week, Grisanti's gave free gifts to lunch patrons of area companies. All guests registered for a free trip to New York City.

Icing the week of planned activities for the restaurant was a $10,000 endowment to the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY. "I couldn't think of a more fitting gift to commemorate our family's 75 years in the foodservice business than this," says Grisanti. Two members of the Grisanti family—Grisanti's daughter Dolores and her husband Peter Katsotis—took the two-year course in culinary arts at the institute and are now working at Grisanti's.

Month-by-month celebrations . . .

A novel extension of the weeklong celebration is the month-by-month celebration. "We didn't want to give away something to just one person, as in a contest. We wanted to do something of value for our regular, loyal customers," explains Jillian Okun, director of public relations for the Chicago Claim Company of Errant Enterprises in Chicago, IL, a group of three restaurants which rolled back prices one night a month over a nine-month period. They chose their typically slowest nights, usually a Monday or Tuesday. During the promotion, the three restaurants averaged a 79 percent increase in number of meals served over their normal weeknight business. One location increased business by 115 percent.

"One of the added benefits of the celebration," says Okun, "was that The Chicago Claim Company, which is famous for its Motherlode Hamburger, was able to draw attention to its other menu items. Many of our customers don't know us for anything else. With the reduced prices, however, we were able to introduce them to many of our more expensive menu items. They might not have sampled ribs at $10.95, but at $6.95 they were willing to try them and found they were excellent and a good value even at the higher price."

Off-premise activities . . .

Besides activities staged within the restaurant, several operators planned activities off premises. One such idea was the three-legs-in-a-dry-sack 50-yard "dash" created by L'Escargot (Chicago, IL) owner Alan Tutzer. "Our Dry Sack distributor had been wanting to do a promotion with us for

a while," recalls Tutzer. "With the anniversary we finally thought of a tie-in, a fun three-legs race using burlap sacks like those on the Dry Sack bottles." Tutzer said he petitioned the alderman of his ward to close off the street in front of the Allerton Hotel, where L'Escargot is located, for the April race—from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The $25 entrance fee for the race was designated for the Cancer Research Foundation. "Coincidentally it turns out that April was Cancer Prevention Month, so the Cancer Foundation recognized the race in its publicity," adds Tutzer.

Other ideas . . .

Other ideas for anniversary celebrations include

- **a big party.** To celebrate his restaurant's 10th anniversary, Don Thompson, owner and operator of Poopsie's Restaurant in Pembroke, MA, hosted a 12-hour party from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m. "We had continuous entertainment, starting with a locally famous jazz singer in the afternoon, followed by a duet and a Dixieland band from nine till closing," recounts Thompson. "I gave away two 90-pound steamship rounds of beef. I had one fellow there all day carving. It was a give back for 10 great years."
- **a commemorative cookbook.** Hasenour's Restaurant in Louisville regularly contributes a column to the local newspaper on cooking tips and recipes. In honor of its 50th anniversary, the owners collected the recipes into a cookbook, which they then gave away during the anniversary celebration. Grisanti's also published a cookbook of interesting Italian recipes, including many of the dishes served in the restaurant.
- **sports tournaments.** Poopsie's Restaurant in Pembroke, MA, organized tournaments for golf and tennis. Owner Don Thompson ordered personalized ties, markers and hats for restaurant patrons who participated.
- **employee reunions.** Employee reunions can boost employee morale and create goodwill. Much of McDonald's 30th anniversary celebration is centered around employee recognition. "We figure over the years McDonald's has employed more than eight million people," says Terry Capatosto, media relations supervisor for McDonald's. "On January 21, 1985, we ran an ad in *The Wall Street Journal, USA Today* and many large city newspapers, asking former crew persons to send in an application. We received more than 75,000 applications. From those, we chose 17 people whom we flew to California for a taping of a commercial in recognition of former employees. We also did a hats-off recognition commercial for current crew members." In addition, individual McDonald's units are encouraged to create their own employee recognition programs.

Getting the word out . . .

Some restaurateurs arrange a press party to kick off their anniversary. The Plaza III's press party demonstrated how to open a bottle of champagne with a saber. "We had to arrange months in advance for champagne and cognac authority Robert Gourdin from Moet-Hennessy, France, to come," says Rob Baker of Plaza III. Goudin also built a 600-glass cascade of expensive champagne glasses for the press party. The Plaza III recieved good TV coverage.

T.G.I. Friday's, currently celebrating its 20th anniversary, didn't wait for the press to come to its door, but instead created two videos to distribute to the press as a part of its anniversary celebration. The one video, already mentioned, chronicled the making of Miami Chicken, a new Friday's product. The other 60-second video features Friday's President Daniel R. Scoggin speaking out on responsible drinking.

Hasenour, on the other hand, put up banners all over town (in laundries, bowling alleys and movies) to let everyone know it was the restaurant's 50th anniversary. The banners read, "Happy 50th Anniversary Hasenour's." He also gave radio stations the opportunity to give away free dinners at Hasenour's. "The announcers could use the dinners as prizes for any contest they might be running," says Hasenour. And they did.

Plan ahead . . .

Whatever the form of celebration, restaurateurs agree plenty of advance planning is required. "Our commemorative engraved beer steins took 12 to 15 weeks to be delivered," notes Don Thompson of Poopsie's Restaurant.

"We built in enough time to go to the courthouse, find my mom and dad's marriage license and have it reprinted on a placemat," recalls John Grisanti. ❑

T.G.I. Friday's non-alcoholic Flings

All Friday's Flings are blended and poured over ice in collins glasses.

Pineapple sunshine
2 oz. pineapple juice
1 oz. orange juice
½ oz. sweet and sour
½ oz. passion fruit syrup
top with 2 oz. lemon Calistoga water
garnish with a lemon squeeze

Golden lime
2 oz. lime mix
2 oz. sweet and sour
½ oz. simple syrup
top with 1 oz. lemon Calistoga and 1 oz. lime Calistoga
garnish with a lemon wheel and a lime wheel

November seabreeze
2 oz. cranberry juice
2 oz. apple juice
1 oz. lime mix
½ oz. simple syrup
top with 1 oz. lime Calistoga
garnish with a lime squeeze

Frozen ocean
2 oz. apple juice
2 oz. sweet and sour
top with 2 oz. lemon Calistoga
garnish with apple slice and lemon wheel

Strawberry surprise
1 oz. frozen strawberries
1 oz. papaya juice
2 oz. apple juice
top with club soda
garnish with a strawberry

THE BOARD ROOM

Balestreri gears up for busy year

Ted Balestreri

NRA's Vice President and President-elect Ted J. Balestreri (Sardine Factory, Monterey, CA) geared up for a busy year at the helm of the foodservice industry's leading trade association in April by addressing two prominent foodservice associations.

In an address to members of the Oklahoma Restaurant Association on April 16, Balestreri discussed the progress of foodservice, demographics and trends fostering that growth, as well as challenges awaiting the industry in the near future.

"Foodservice has grown rapidly in the last decades," Balestreri said. "Foodservice currently receives 38 cents out of every consumer dollar spent on food, and NRA economists predict that figure will rise."

While pointing to demographic trends, like the maturation of the post World War II baby boom generation and the increasing number of single households and working women, Balestreri called the basic reason for foodservice's good fortune "our own good business sense and creativity."

"A great number of today's customers are concerned about nutrition," Balestreri said. "They want meals that are high in fiber and low in fat, sugar and salt. You might say that in response to consumer demand, we have created a new cuisine—poached chicken breast on a bed of papaya, avocado salad, whole wheat hamburger buns. We created these new items to fill a need, and we are prospering."

"The industry is responding in the same way to the growing consumer interest in ethnic foods," Balestreri continued.

Balestreri also cited other examples of how operators are successfully meeting customer needs. Balestreri called government intervention in business "the greatest threat to our welfare today." Balestreri outlined the following issues on NRA's government relations calendar:

- any limit on the deductibility of business meals;
- the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) which allows employers a tax credit for hiring from underprivileged segments of the population;
- the Youth Differential Bill, which would permit employers to pay wages equal to 70 percent of the minimum wage to newly hired teenagers from May 1 to September 30;
- a limited ban on sulfites at the federal level; and
- support of the national campaign to reduce drunk driving while fighting hostile legislation that arises out of public concern.

On April 19, Balestreri addressed the International Military Club Executives Association.

Grisanti speaks out on alcohol awareness and bar sales

Michael J. Grisanti (Casa Grisanti, Inc., Louisville, KY), was the featured luncheon speaker at "On Premise '85," a conference on marketing alcoholic beverages to restaurants and bars. The conference was sponsored by *Restaurants & Institutions* at the Plaza Hotel in New York City on April 16, 1985.

Grisanti, NRA's treasurer-elect and chairman of the Task Force on Alcohol Awareness, discussed the problem of diminishing bar sales, burgeoning legislation aimed at stemming the sale and consumption of alcohol and NRA's efforts to reduce the incidence of alcohol-related traffic accidents without government regulation.

"Foodservice has grown rapidly in the last decade," Grisanti said. "We are no longer merely a luxury trade. We have become an essential part of America's food distribution system. The one major area of concern is, of course, the area we share. NRA members from all parts of the country report that bar sales are dropping.

He spoke of the association's three-pronged alcohol awareness program, that was introduced at the NRA Show last year. "There are many benefits to be derived from this program," he observed. "It allows restaurateurs to act responsibly in regard to drunk driving and still demonstrate their conviction that the ultimate responsibility for moderate consumption lies with the consumer. It allows us to regulate our own alcoholic beverage sales and thereby reduce the pressure to regulate the industry further. It allows our members to introduce prudent in-house practices, which can be cited in a court of law if necessary, and it helps them to create an atmosphere in which responsible drinkers will feel that they can consume a moderate amount of alcohol before driving or being driven home."

Michael Grisanti

Grisanti linked the decline in bar sales to a general concern about drunk driving, reaffirmed NRA's commitment to heighten alcohol awareness throughout the industry and nation and spoke of misguided legislation that depressed bar sales without reducing drunk driving. "There are too many alcohol-related traffic fatalities in this country," Grisanti said, "and we are committed to doing our part to reduce this number. Unfortunately, it is the responsible citizen who tends to react to the widespread warnings about the dangers of drinking and driving."

—Dorothy Dee

TO YOUR HEALTH

New FDA regulations for sodium labeling

There was a time in French history when salt was so highly regarded that a dinner without it was described as a diabolic banquet or witches' supper. Salt, once the single most important commodity of world commerce, has fallen from favor in modern society. *The 1984 Annual Gallup Report on Eating Out* reflects this movement. Concern about salt has tripled during the past seven

years, and restaurant patrons are more likely than ever to order low-salt meals.

Mounting interest in health and fitness is at the root of this trend. Excessive intakes of sodium are associated with high blood pressure. In turn, high blood pressure is a risk factor in the development of heart disease, kidney disease and stroke. About 40 percent of salt is sodium; the rest is chloride.

Although we need small amounts of sodium to regulate body fluids and maintain blood volume and pressure, it is required in quantities far less than we consume. Health professionals consider 1,100 to 3,300 mg. of sodium a day to be safe and adequate. The average daily American intake falls anywhere between 75 to 180 percent of the recommended upper limit.

Allowable sodium levels in descriptors . . .

Because of our excessive sodium consumption and because an estimated 60 million Americans suffer from hypertension, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has embarked on a sodium education program that includes new regulations concerning the sodium labeling of foods. Up until this point the rules governing label claims of sodium content have been loose; terms such as "low sodium" lacked definition. As of July 1985, any food that is labeled lower in sodium will be governed by strict regulations. These regulations, which dictate allowable sodium levels for commonly used descriptors, are:

- *Sodium free*—not more than 5 mg. per serving
- *Very low sodium*—not more than 35 mg. per serving
- *Low sodium*—140 mg. or less per serving
- *Reduced sodium*—75 percent lower than the usual sodium level and
- *Unsalted*—a product that's processed without the normally used salt.

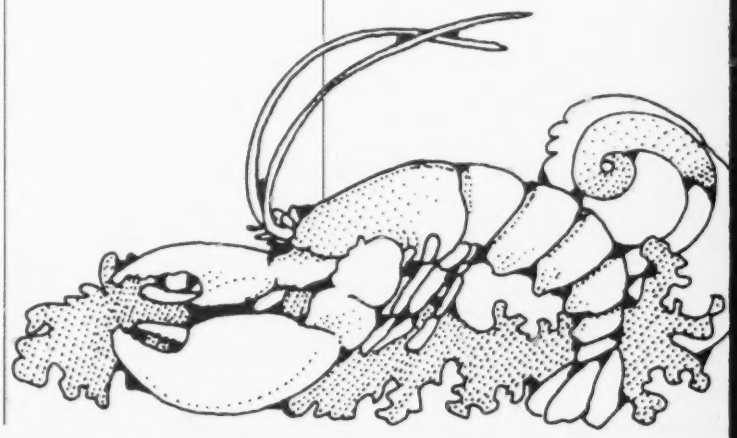
In addition, as of July 1, the amount of sodium per serving must be included on all nutrition-labeled foods. Currently the sodium content of food doesn't have to be included on the nutrition information panel. Nutrition information is mandatory when the processor adds nutrients to foods, such as fortified or enriched foods, or if a nutritional claim is made, such as a product has "reduced calories." About 40 percent of processed foods now have nutrition information because many manufacturers voluntarily include it as a consumer service. This sodium information should make it easier for concerned consumers to regulate their sodium intakes.

Government education continues . . .

The government will continue its education efforts in this area. Its thrust until now was to alert the public to the hazards of too much salt. And it has been successful. By late 1982, four out of 10 adults said they were trying to cut down on salt or sodium. Future government education programs will concentrate on teaching consumers how to control the amount of sodium in their diets. Both the FDA and the Department of Agriculture will continue to use posters, pamphlets and radio and television ads to deliver this message.

The food industry, too, has responded. An increasing number of unsalted and lower-sodium foods are being marketed. It's no longer surprising to see bags of unsalted potato chips on the grocery shelf next to the traditional salty varieties. The unsalted offerings range from low-sodium canned soups to unsalted nuts. Low sodium versions of house brands are also beginning to emerge.

This trend of lowering sodium in processed foods is likely to continue, but it is slow in coming. Salt is one of the most commonly used food additives. In some cases, as in bread production, its presence profoundly affects the texture of the product. But in most instances salt is added to satisfy buyers who are accustomed to the taste. Yet, if the concern over sodium remains an issue, manufacturers will have no choice but to gradually reduce the amount of salt used in processing and wean the public from its habit.



Sodium content of some commonly used foods

Keep in mind the recommended daily range for sodium intake is 1100 to 3300 mg.

Food	Amount	Mg. of sodium
Seasonings		
Salt	1 teaspoon	1,955
Mustard		
Dried	1 teaspoon	trace
Prepared	1 teaspoon	65
Soy sauce	1 tablespoon	858
Tabasco sauce	1 teaspoon	22
Chicken stock		
Canned, ready-to-use	1 cup	737
Homemade (no added salt)	1 cup	120
Instant, dried powder	1 tablespoon	2,431
Pork		
Cured ham	6 ounces	1,563
Loin chop	6 ounces	103
Seafood		
Haddock	6 ounces	168
Shrimp	6 ounces	190
Lobster	6 ounces	507
Cheese		
Blue	1 ounce	390
Mozzarella	1 ounce	104
Grated Parmesan	1 ounce (5½ tablespoons)	521
Salad dressing		
French, commercial	1 tablespoon	192
French, homemade	1 tablespoon	92
Oil and vinegar	1 tablespoon	0
Vegetables		
Green beans		
Fresh	1 cup	7
Canned	1 cup	295
Peas		
Fresh	¾ cup	2
Frozen	¾ cup	115
Canned	¾ cup	236
Potato		
Baked	1 medium	3
Unsalted french fries	10 pieces	3
Hash browns	½ cup	288
Mashed from dehydrated	1 cup	491
Desserts		
Fresh strawberries	10 large	1
Strawberry pie	1 piece	227
Melon balls	1 cup	21
Carrot cake with cream cheese icing	1 small piece	123

Cooking pointers for salt-sensitive patrons . . .

As a result of increased sodium awareness, you may notice more questions about the use of salt in your cooking and may receive requests for lower sodium items. Sodium does occur naturally in some foods, most noticeably in milk, meats and some seafoods. So no one can produce a totally sodium free, well-balanced meal. With the following points in mind, you'll be able to satisfy your patrons who are concerned about sodium.

- The fresher, the better is the basic rule of thumb when the culinary goal is to lower sodium levels. Fresh vegetables, soups and stocks all have far less sodium than their canned or dried counterparts.
- Cook without salt if your patrons request it. In most recipes salt is included merely for flavor and omitting it won't drastically affect the outcome of the recipe.
- If you are concerned that cooking without salt will leave your dishes flat, try adding herbs and spices. A multitude of new and appealing flavor combinations can be created. For more information, see ***NRA NEWS***, March 1985.
- Avoid the not-so-obvious salty foods when trying to reduce the sodium content of your recipes. Cheeses; tomato paste; bread crumbs; prepared mustard; baking powder; baking soda; and barbecue, Worchestershire and soy sauces are a few examples.
- If you want ideas in low-sodium recipes, turn to the good, low-sodium cookbooks on the market. They range from gourmet to home-style recipes.
- Most institutional food suppliers carry lower-sodium, prepared foods, such as soup bases. Ask your purveyor what's available.
- If you're going to make the effort to reduce your salt levels, tell your customers. You can indicate low-sodium items on your menu or have your wait staff inform patrons at the table.
- Don't use the FDA descriptors unless you are certain that the sodium content of your dish meets the defined levels. Terms such as "lower in sodium" or "prepared without added salt" can work just as well.

—Claire Regan, R.D.

Wine consumption is up—
But are your profits?

Wine

& The Bottom Line

Back by popular demand
A second edition

Americans are consuming more wine than ever before. *Wine & The Bottom Line* will help restauranteurs follow this trend to their advantage. It is a simple & comprehensive guide which will help build wine sales through merchandising, variety and selection.

Edmund Osterland's *Wine & The Bottom Line* fills a gap in wine publications in the foodservice industry. It's basic, it's readable—written not only for the wine connoisseur but also the average restaurateur. This book talks directly to restaurant managers, focusing on what they need to know to build their sales through:

— employee training
— customer education
— profitable merchandising
— selection
— storage and
— presentation and service guidelines.

Don't ignore your profit potential. Order this NRA publication today. Call (202) 638-6100 or toll-free (800) 424-5156 for more information.

Fisher's Law #63

An allegory

Dear child,

Today you are leaving home to make your way in the world as your own person. As this may be one of our last opportunities to capture your full attention (you will be wrapped up in your own responsibilities in the future), we would like to say some things to you. They are a summary of much of what we have given you over the years in terms of values and perspectives by which you will govern your life.

Although this marks the day of your departure, you are not moving out so much as you are moving on and, hopefully, moving up. You are stepping into your future, and you should do so directly, shoulders square, with confidence and with clear vision. It is dangerous to step ahead while looking back. Remember the past, profit from it as applicable, but enter the future by looking forward and moving upward.

As you proceed through life, always be clear-headed, stay totally alert and maintain quick reflexes, both mental and physical. Don't be foolish enough to put yourself in a position where your mind turns foggy or you are unable to maintain full control of yourself. Your health is your most prized possession, followed by your own family and then your livelihood. You are no good to your family or your business and industry if you allow your health to be impaired. Keep these priorities straight.

Your "real" learning about life is just about to begin. Yes, you are "book smart," but you also need to be "street smart." Experience will be your teacher, and accomplishment will be your judge from now on. Some of your experiences will be happy, some will not. Things generally balance out in that regard in the course of life. Accept the happy ones for what they are; but do so maturely, with dignity and with a measure of gratitude for your good fortune. Accept the difficult circumstances for what they are: tests of your will, your resolve, your spirit, your perseverance, your buoyancy, your self-respect. Don't let difficult circumstances defeat you. Rise above them. Control your own life: Be the director of your fate, the artist of your destiny. The sun rises every morning, no matter how dark the night. Some of your accomplishments will be large; others will be small. But the important thing is that they are yours. Be proud of them, but don't be content with them. You are capable of doing more and should strive to maximize your potential.

We hope that you will be honest in every aspect of your life; in your relationships with people, in money and property matters and, most of all, with yourself. There is no greater deception than self-deception. Centuries ago, a fellow named Shakespeare summed it up quite well, "This above all: to thine own self be true." That way, you will rest easy at night. Make decisions with your mind and not your heart. Be compassionate, but don't be "soft." Be objective, but don't be "hard."

In both your personal and professional life, set standards for yourself that are above those that others would set for you. It will serve you in good stead in everything you do.

There will be times in your life when you will feel frustrated and pressured. That's a normal reaction for a complex environment. Remember, however, that most times frustration and pressure are self-imposed. Don't become the victim of tension. Use it as a spur to greater achievement. Stability is an admirable trait; and when you are in adverse situations with other people who may react emotionally and irrationally, you will need to be the calming influence to bring conditions to a satisfactory state of affairs. Take your responsibilities seriously, but don't take yourself too seriously. Keep your sense of humor. Stay quick-witted, curious, keen and eager.

As you leave the comfort and security of home, more and more you will become a world citizen. You will meet people who do not have the same values you do. Respect their values, but command respect for yours as well by your being and by your example. Expect to make some tough judgment calls as you go through life; but if your basic fiber is resilient and you go with basic instincts, you'll get through alright.

When you encounter conditions in life that defy reason and explanation, don't be overwhelmed by them. Work to improve that which needs improvement, but remember that this can be done in large measure through self-actualization. Climb the mountain of your choice, swim the ocean of your desire, run the race at the pace you set for yourself. Fulfill the dream you want to fulfill. You are your own drummer.

At some point, perhaps when you are a little older and have a family of your own, you may reflect upon your own upbringing with a touch of melancholy. Depending on your economic situation, you may feel that you want to do something for your parents that expresses, tangibly, your gratitude. Don't! Pass forward to your own family that which you would consider for us. We will know when that is, and that is the very best thing you can ever do for us. That is our wish. Respect it.

We have given you roots, and now you have your wings. Our home is always open to you, but you should consider it now as a location for visits rather than a permanent refuge. You are on your own, but you are not alone. Your life will be what you make of it—nothing more, nothing less. If you are proud of it, we will be proud of you.

One more thing needs to be said. We love you. We always have. We always will!

—Your parents

Fisher's 63rd Law: **When it comes time to depart, whether it is individually initiated or organizationally determined, do it with class.**

Mexican restaurants—hotter than ever

Mexican restaurants have become one of the hottest segments in the foodservice industry. Between 1977 and 1984, Mexican restaurant traffic jumped 65 percent, substantially above the 10 percent average gain posted by all types of restaurants. Mexican restaurant sales skyrocketed 191 percent during the same period, dramatically outpacing the 80 percent increase for all restaurants. The number of Mexican restaurants has increased significantly, and this has helped spur the segment's growth. One portion of the market, the franchise sector, has experienced tremendous gains. In 1983, 39 firms operated Mexican franchise restaurants versus only 14 firms in 1973. By 1985, the Mexican franchise sector should include 4,228 units and reach $2.2 billion in sales, up from 1,030 units and only $138 million in sales in 1973.

A major factor fueling this impressive growth has been consumers' growing interest in ethnic foods. More than a third of the respondents in NRA's *Consumer Preferences for Ethnic Foods in Restaurants* study said they are currently eating more ethnic food in restaurants than they did three years ago. Mexican food is one of the top choices. One-fifth reported that Mexican food was their favorite ethnic food and an impressive four in 10 said they ordered Mexican food at least once a month.

Mexican restaurant sales and traffic should continue to grow since consumer interest in ethnic foods seems far from satisfied. Almost half the respondents in NRA's ethnic food study strongly agreed that they would try more ethnic dishes if they were available at restaurants. And over a third strongly agreed they enjoyed hot and spicy dishes—a Mexican specialty.

This article highlights various aspects of the Mexican restaurant market. It should provide useful information for Mexican restaurant operators as well as restaurateurs who currently offer or plan to add Mexican food items to their menus.

Who dines at Mexican restaurants? . . .

Although Mexican restaurants are popular among many Americans, certain customers are more frequent visitors than others. NRA's *Consumer Preferences for Ethnic Foods in Restaurants* study points out the consumer groups that are most apt to frequently visit (at least once a month) Mexican restaurants.

For instance, a large proportion of men—45 percent—said they dined at Mexican restaurants one or more times a month. This compares with a smaller 36 percent of female respondents.

Among the age groups, younger consumers are the most frequent visitors. More than half the 18 to 24-year-olds and more than four in 10 of the 25 to 34-year-old group reported dining at Mexican restaurants at least once a month. In comparison, only 37 percent of the 35 to 54-year-old segment and a small 26 percent of respondents over 55 years of age indicated they frequently visited Mexican establishments.

Percent change in Mexican traffic versus all restaurants

	Total restaurants	Mexican restaurants
1980	−3.8%	2.8%
1981	1.8%	9.2%
1982	1.0%	1.2%
1983	2.1%	3.3%
1984	6.4%	11.5%

Source: *CREST Family Report,* September 1977–August 1984

Single and two-person households are also loyal Mexican patrons. More than half the single respondents and more than four in 10 two-person householders said they dined at Mexican restaurants one or more times a month. This compares with a smaller 36 percent of three-person households and 38 percent of households with four or more members.

Upper income groups are also Mexican restaurant fans. Almost half the respondents earning more than $35,000 a year reported visiting Mexican restaurants one or more times a month. On the other hand, only one in three patrons with incomes under $15,000 a year dine at Mexican restaurants as often.

Two other groups that visit Mexican establishments more frequently than average are working women (more than four in 10 visit Mexican restaurants at least once a month) and households with teenagers (43 percent).

Consumers who generally dine out frequently are also frequent Mexican restaurant customers. For instance, a substantial 61 percent of respondents who average 11 or more restaurant visits a month dine at Mexican establishments at least once a month. Over half the customers who dine out between six and 10 times a month also visit Mexican restaurants regularly. In comparison, infrequent restaurant patrons who dine out only once or twice a month are less apt to choose Mexican restaurants—only 26 percent of this group reported visiting Mexican restaurants at least once a month.

Mexican restaurants should enjoy continued growth since several of the customer groups that frequently patronize them are expected to experience sub-

Proportion of respondents who visit Mexican restaurants one or more times a month

Sex	Men	44.6%	**Income**	Under $15,000	31.5%
	Women	36.2%		$15,000–$24,999	36.2%
Age	18 to 24	52.0%		$25,000–$34,999	44.8%
	25 to 34	43.6%		$35,000 and over	48.1%
	35 to 54	36.9%	**Monthly visits to all restaurants**	One to two	26.0%
	55 and over	26.4%		Three to five	31.4%
Household size	One	50.6%		Six to ten	54.4%
	Two	42.5%		Eleven or more	60.8%
	Three	36.5%			
	Four or more	37.8%			

Source: *Consumer Preferences for Ethnic Foods in Restaurants*, NRA, March 1984

stantial growth. For instance, working women, singles, baby boomers and households earning more than $35,000 a year are projected to be some of the fastest growing demographic segments of the decade.

Where do Mexican restaurant patrons dine? . . .

Quickservice Mexican restaurants capture the lion's share of Mexican restaurant traffic. According to the *CREST Household Report*, Mexican fast food establishments accounted for a whopping 58 percent of overall Mexican restaurant traffic in 1984. This sector also represented 37 percent of total Mexican sales.

Midscale Mexican operations comprised a smaller 19 percent of Mexican restaurant traffic and more than a fifth of overall sales.

Upscale Mexican establishments accounted for almost a quarter of the segment's customer visits, and even more important, they captured the largest proportion of sales among Mexican restaurants—40 percent.

When do customers dine at Mexican restaurants?. . .

Customers choose different restaurants for a variety of reasons, depending on the occasion and the meal period. For instance, quick service and convenience are probably among the top reasons patrons choose Mexican fast food restaurants. Not surprisingly, lunch accounts for the largest proportion of customer traffic at these establishments—about half. Snacks also comprise a comparatively large portion of traffic—nine percent. Four in 10 patrons visit quickservice Mexican restaurants for dinner but only one percent for breakfast.

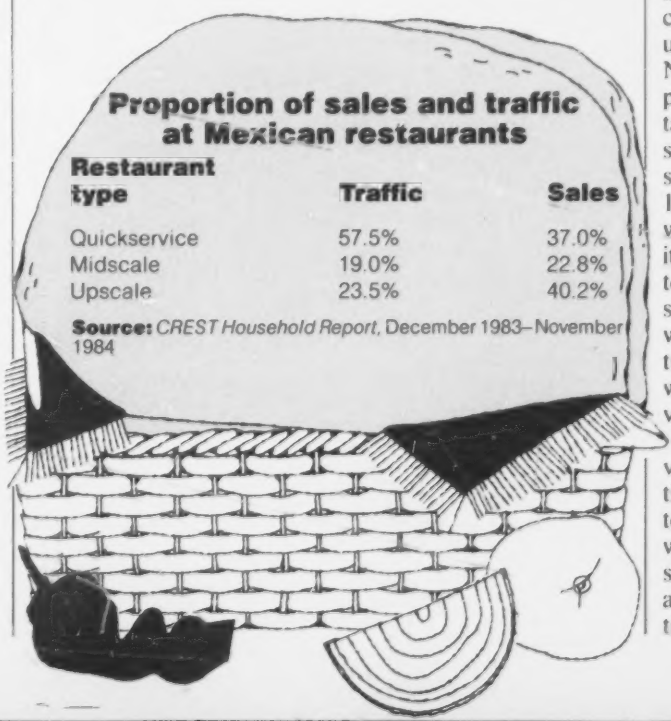
According to NRA's *Study of Consumer Restaurant Behavior Using the Occasion Segmentation Approach*, many customers visit full service Mexican restaurants for a family meal, a special night out or for social fun. This is reflected in the large number of customers who visit midscale and upscale Mexican establishments for dinner. Dinner accounts for 58 percent of occasions at midscale Mexican restaurants and an even higher 66 percent of upscale Mexican visits. A contributing factor is that 42 percent of the traffic at midscale and upscale Mexican restaurants occurs on Friday and Saturday—the most popular days for eating dinner out.

Lunch accounts for a larger portion of the traffic at midscale Mexican restaurants (39 percent) than at upscale Mexican outlets (30 percent). Snacks and breakfast both comprise small portions of the overall traffic at these establishments.

Proportion of sales and traffic at Mexican restaurants

Restaurant type	Traffic	Sales
Quickservice	57.5%	37.0%
Midscale	19.0%	22.8%
Upscale	23.5%	40.2%

Source: *CREST Household Report*, December 1983–November 1984



What Mexican foods are most popular? . . .

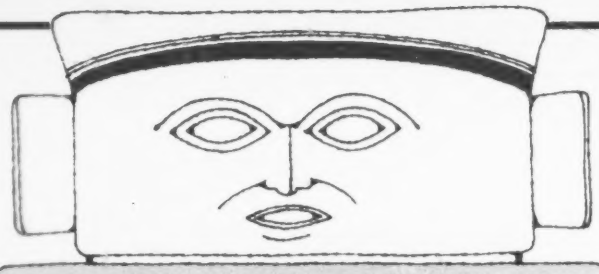
A recent Gallup survey asked customers to identify the items they would most likely order from a menu composed of common and uncommon Mexican foods. Not surprisingly, the most popular main dish was tacos—crispy tortillas served with a choice of stuffing. More than four in 10 respondents said they were likely to order the item. Enchiladas (soft corn tortillas with a choice of stuffing and sauce, topped with melted cheese) captured the number two spot with 37 percent of the votes. Burritos (corn or flour tortillas stuffed with various fillings) were mentioned by 35 percent and tostados (crispy flat tortillas with a choice of stuffings, served with lettuce, sauce and cheese) were mentioned by 26 percent. Less

popular main dishes included tamales (masa or cornmeal filled with beef, wrapped in cornhusks and steamed) with 18 percent saying they were likely to order the dish, chili rellenos (sweet red pepper stuffed with cheese, beef or chicken) with 16 percent, and flautas (long, crispy tortillas with choice of beef, chicken or cheese) mentioned by one in 10 respondents.

Among the listed side dishes, Spanish rice was most frequently mentioned, with more than one in three customers saying they were very likely to order the dish. Refried beans and guacamole were chosen by 28 percent and 22 percent, respectively. A more unusual item, nopalitos (pickled cactus salad), was listed by very few respondents.

Chili salsa was easily the most popular sauce in the survey—one in five patrons said they would order the spicy hot sauce. Salsa verde (a piquant sauce of imported chiles and green sauce) was mentioned by one in 10, and only four percent said they would order salsa mole (a blend of Mexican chocolate, nutmeats, peppers and spices).

The number of restaurants that serve various Mexican items probably has some effect on customer preferences. Often patrons order items they are most familiar with. Looking at *Restaurants & Institutions'* "1984 Menu Census" shows some of the Mexican items that are offered by a large number of restaurants. For instance, among the Mexican foods included in the study, nachos are served by the largest proportion of establishments—23 percent. Taco salads and tortilla chips are also popular menu items—one in five restaurants serve them. Tacos and burritos round out the top five Mexican items and are offered by 17 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of the surveyed restaurants. Enchiladas, guacamole and gazpacho (cold, spicy soup) are served in approximately 13 percent of all restaurants, while salsa, chili rellenos and tostados are offered by one in 10.



Number and concentration of Mexican restaurants

Region	Number of units	Proportion of region's restaurants
New England	116	0.7%
Mid-Atlantic	410	0.9%
South Atlantic	909	2.0%
East North Central	1,265	2.5%
East South Central	301	2.0%
West North Central	829	3.7%
West South Central	2,704	6.6%
Mountain	1,331	7.6%
Pacific	3,986	8.1%
Total U.S.	**11,851**	**3.9%**

Source: *RECOUNT*, Spring 1984

Some Mexican items, particularly appetizers, have experienced a tremendous surge of popularity during the last couple of years. For instance, nachos were listed as good selling items by 15 percent of respondents in the "1983 Menu Census." By 1985, the proportion had jumped to 28 percent. Salsa has also become a "hot" item. In 1985, 15 percent of the restaurateurs reported it as a good seller, up significantly from five percent two years earlier. Guacamole is now listed as a good selling item by 12 percent of the respondents, up from seven percent in 1983. These increases reflect the growing popularity of Mexican items as well as the increasing number of non-Mexican restaurants catering to customers' desire for spicy, ethnic foods.

Where are Mexican restaurants located? . . .

Mexican restaurants are most prevalent in the western part of the country. According to the 1984 *RECOUNT* study, two-thirds of the nation's Mexican restaurants are located in the West South Central, Mountain and Pacific regions. These areas also enjoy a larger concentration of Mexican restaurants than do other regions. For instance, Mexican establishments account for eight percent of total restaurants in the Pacific region—substantially above the 3.9 percent average reported for the U.S. as a whole. In the Mountain region Mexican operations make up 7.6 percent of the restaurants, and the West South Central region reports 6.6 percent of its restaurants are Mexican. The large proportion of Mexican restaurants in the

Customer mix varies among different restaurant types

The following highlights the customer groups who make up an above average proportion of the patrons at the three major Mexican restaurant types—quickservice, midscale and upscale.

Quickservice
- large households with three or more members
- households with incomes under $20,000 a year
- customers less than 35 years old
- patrons dining with children less than 12 years old
- households with one employed spouse

Midscale
- singles
- three and four person households
- households with incomes between $15,000 and $30,000
- patrons more than 34 years old
- two-income households
- customers dining with children less than 12 years old

Upscale
- singles and two-person households
- households with incomes over $30,000 a year
- customers between 25 and 64 years of age
- unmarried employed patrons
- adults dining without children

Source: *CREST Household Report*, November 1983-December 1984

West reflects neighboring Mexico's influence and the popularity of Mexican-based cuisine. According to a recent Gallup study, 35 percent of the surveyed Westerners said Mexican was their favorite ethnic food—the largest percentage among respondents.

Further east, Mexican restaurants account for a smaller proportion of the establishments in a region. For instance, Mexican restaurants make up less than one percent of the eating places in New England and in the Mid-Atlantic states. The proportion of eastern consumers who prefer Mexican food above other ethnic specialties is also small—four percent.

Mexican outlook remains strong . . .

The Mexican segment should enjoy continued growth for a variety of reasons. Some of these include:

- *Demographics:* Some of the top Mexican restaurant customer segments are among the fastest growing demographic groups.
- *Occasion mix:* Mexican restaurants appeal to a wide variety of customers and offer a comfortable atmosphere for families as well as special occasions.
- *Price/value:* Mexican establishments often offer a good price/value, which appeals to many consumers.
- *Growing interest in ethnic foods:* An increasing number of Americans are enjoying the variety and different taste sensations that ethnic foods offer.
- *Geographic opportunities:* Although Mexican restaurants are highly concentrated in the West, opportunities for expansion exist in the East.

Eating place sales rise fastest in the South and West

All nine census regions made significant gains in eating place sales between 1977 and 1982, with especially impressive advances posted in the southern and western states, according to the *1982 Census of Retail Trade*. Total U.S. eating place sales reached $93.2 billion in 1982, up 71.0 percent from 1977.

This article highlights eating place sales and number of establishments for all 50 states plus the District of Columbia as well as the major regions of the country. Information for per capita sales and population per establishment for full service and fast food restaurants has also been compiled and is available from NRA's Research Department. This report may be useful to restaurateurs who wish to compare their own sales growth with that of all restaurants in their state.*

The eating place sales and establishment data presented here are for restaurants and lunchrooms (outlets which offer table service), refreshment places (limited menu, fast food establishments which generally do not offer table service), cafeterias and other types of establishments (contract feeders as well as ice cream and frozen custard stands). In addition, the statistics shown here are for eating places with payroll only and do not include "mom and pop" operations having no paid employees.

* NRA's research and information service department has additional information from the 1982 Census for each of the 50 states, including restaurant sales, number of units and number of employees for cities, counties and metropolitan areas. Revised information from the *1977 Census of Retail Trade* is also available. You can get this information by writing NRA's research department in Washington, DC.

Overall eating place sales and establishments on the rise . . .

Eating place sales in the United States reached $93.2 billion in 1982, up a substantial 71.0 percent from 1977 sales of $54.5 billion. This represents an average annual gain of 11.3 percent. With menu prices rising 8.9 percent per year during the five-year period, real eating place sales (adjusted for inflation) posted a 2.4 percent average yearly increase.

Of the nine census regions, the Pacific region recorded the highest overall eating place sales in 1982—$16.9 billion versus sales of $9.7 billion in 1977. This represents an 11.8 percent average annual increase in sales. In second place was the East North Central region, which recorded eating place sales of $16.0 billion. The South Atlantic states followed with sales of $15.4 billion in 1982. The fastest growth rate in eating place sales was in the West South Central region—up a whopping 101.8 percent between 1977 and 1982. The Mountain region recorded the next highest advance of 86.0 percent, while the South Atlantic region came in a close third with a gain of 81.6 percent.

In 1982, the number of eating place establishments in the U.S. totaled 258,584 units—up from 238,583 units in 1977. The East North Central region had more eating place establishments than any other region—45,410 units, compared to 43,516 units in 1977. The Pacific states with 41,901 units had the second largest amount. The South Atlantic region also recorded an impressive 40,295 units in 1982, compared with 35,511 units in 1977.

Between 1977 and 1982, the number of eating place units grew at the fastest rate in the Pacific region—15.7 percent. The Mountain states (up 15.5 percent) and the South Atlantic region (up 13.5 percent) also posted significant gains in the number of eating place establishments.

Per capita sales up in 1982 . . .

In 1982, total U.S. per capita sales at restaurants, lunchrooms and refreshment places nearly doubled 1977 levels. Per capita sales at restaurants and lunchrooms totaled $203 a person in 1982 compared with $130 in 1977. Per capita limited menu sales also made a substantial advance from $89 per person in 1977 to $154 in 1982.

In addition, the number of patrons for each restaurant and lunchroom establishment in the nation grew from 1,846 in 1977 to 1,887 people per unit in 1982. This reflects that the population grew at a faster pace than the number of restaurant and lunchroom units. However, the number of patrons per fast food unit fell during this five-year period from 2,363 people per unit in 1977 to 2,120 in 1982, reflecting the fact that unit growth outpaced population growth.

—Susan Adelman

Eating place sales by region and restaurant type (1977 and 1982)

Region	Number of establishments 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Sales (000) 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Avg. annual increase in sales
New England					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	8,239	11.1%	$ 3,242,887	82.9%	12.8%
Refreshment places	5,456	5.4	1,553,523	69.7	11.2
Cafeterias	345	(7.0)	52,788	18.2	3.4
Other	1,760	(3.9)	630,007	42.1	7.3
Total	*15,800*	*6.8%*	*$ 5,479,205*	*72.5%*	*11.5%*
Middle Atlantic					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	19,667	(1.5)%	$ 7,230,240	58.0%	9.6%
Refreshment places	14,551	10.4	3,973,285	60.4	9.9
Cafeterias	645	(28.6)	184,339	16.2	3.0
Other	4,368	(2.4)	1,730,190	60.5	9.9
Total	*39,431*	*1.8%*	*$13,118,054*	*58.2%*	*9.7%*
East North Central					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	21,441	(0.2)%	$ 8,030,693	49.0%	8.3%
Refreshment places	18,980	13.3	6,422,660	67.4	10.9
Cafeterias	816	(20.8)	336,623	26.5	4.8
Other	4,173	(1.6)	1,164,610	36.5	6.4
Total	*45,410*	*4.4%*	*$15,954,586*	*54.2%*	*9.1%*
West North Central*					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	10,237	(2.7)%	$ 3,145,904	50.8%	8.6%
Refreshment places	8,531	15.5	2,562,602	75.9	11.9
Cafeterias	477	(15.1)	185,289	39.7	6.9
Other	1,505	9.3	376,738	63.0	10.3
Total	*20,750*	*4.5%*	*$ 6,270,533*	*60.5%*	*9.9%*
South Atlantic*					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	18,374	8.4%	$ 7,080,154	76.0%	12.0%
Refreshment places	18,035	23.0	6,599,086	93.4	14.1
Cafeterias	1,114	(17.0)	600,198	46.7	8.0
Other	2,772	7.8	1,151,696	75.3	11.9
Total	*40,295*	*13.5%*	*$15,431,134*	*81.6%*	*12.7%*
East South Central					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	5,321	(9.1)%	$ 1,645,950	51.4%	8.7%
Refreshment places	6,476	17.8	2,267,147	88.5	13.5
Cafeterias	411	(21.4)	188,722	51.7	8.7
Other	880	4.6	257,787	44.0	7.6
Total	*13,088*	*2.9%*	*$ 4,359,606*	*68.1%*	*11.0%*
West South Central					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	10,898	2.5%	$ 4,230,007	96.0%	14.4%
Refreshment places	13,487	19.3	4,589,409	107.5	15.7
Cafeterias	924	(0.6)	685,718	81.4	12.6
Other	1,575	15.0	837,919	121.7	17.2
Total	*26,884*	*10.9%*	*$10,343,053*	*101.8%*	*15.1%*
Mountain					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	7,592	8.0%	$ 2,895,972	79.1%	12.4%
Refreshment places	6,235	26.1	1,906,754	98.7	14.7
Cafeterias	330	(7.8)	172,343	76.6	12.1
Other	868	29.2	350,034	85.7	13.2
Total	*15,025*	*15.5%*	*$ 5,325,103*	*86.0%*	*13.3%*
Pacific					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	20,882	10.0%	$ 9,633,713	66.4%	10.7%
Refreshment places	17,602	24.9	5,803,227	86.4	13.3
Cafeterias	967	(5.5)	334,740	46.0	7.9
Other	2,450	16.6	1,105,330	104.1	15.4
Total	*41,901*	*15.7%*	*$16,877,010*	*74.5%*	*11.8%*
All regions					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	122,851	3.2%	$47,135,520	65.4%	10.6%
Refreshment places	109,353	17.6	35,677,693	82.2	12.7
Cafeterias	6,029	(14.4)	2,740,760	48.9	8.2
Other	20,351	4.4	2,604,311	67.1	10.8
Total	**258,584**	**8.4%**	**$93,158,284**	**71.0%**	**11.3%**

**The 1977 sales data for cafeterias and other eating places was not reported for North Dakota in the West North Central region and Delaware in the South Atlantic region. Thus, the change in sales may be somewhat higher or lower for these regions, depending on the actual sales figures for these states.*

Source: *1982 Census of Retail Trade*, Bureau of Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Eating place sales by state and restaurant type (1977 and 1982)

Region	Number of establishments 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Sales (000) 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Average annual increase in sales
NEW ENGLAND					
Connecticut					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,953	11.5%	$744,923	83.5%	12.9%
Refreshment places	1,317	7.3	390,326	66.1	10.7
Cafeterias	90	(5.3)	10,182	(20.0)	(4.5)
Other	514	(0.4)	162,507	30.2	5.4
Maine					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	831	9.5%	$226,487	64.6%	10.5%
Refreshment places	527	1.9	140,988	64.6	10.5
Cafeterias	26	(23.5)	3,020	24.1	4.4
Other	147	10.5	26,838	58.3	9.6
Massachusetts					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	3,547	12.8%	$1,677,185	89.1%	13.6%
Refreshment places	2,535	2.9	746,982	72.5	11.5
Cafeterias	165	(1.8)	27,327	35.5	6.3
Other	814	(12.7)	359,923	45.5	7.8
New Hampshire					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	743	5.7%	$255,366	79.1%	12.4%
Refreshment places	409	0.2	115,527	57.1	9.5
Cafeterias	38	(2.6)	6,094	102.3	15.1
Other	127	33.7	30,238	71.4	11.4
Rhode Island					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	680	9.7%	$214,318	66.4%	10.7%
Refreshment places	442	17.9	107,089	77.8	12.2
Cafeterias	19	26.7	4,272	75.3	11.9
Other	97	5.8	31,499	31.2	5.6
Vermont					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	485	10.0%	$124,608	76.2%	12.0%
Refreshment places	226	22.8	52,611	89.4	13.6
Cafeterias	7	(65.0)	1,893	(51.4)	(13.5)
Other	61	17.3	19,002	50.2	8.5
MIDDLE ATLANTIC					
New Jersey					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	3,630	2.6%	$1,506,008	61.3%	10.0%
Refreshment places	2,939	10.1	805,442	59.0	9.7
Cafeterias	122	(22.3)	36,478	41.7	7.2
Other	966	3.1	341,616	72.8	11.6
New York					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	10,684	(2.8)%	$3,760,589	57.2%	9.5%
Refreshment places	6,958	8.6	1,798,735	55.6	9.2
Cafeterias	344	(24.9)	93,049	21.4	4.0
Other	2,121	(6.2)	974,432	58.0	9.6
Pennsylvania					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	5,553	(1.5)%	$1,963,643	57.1%	9.5%
Refreshment places	4,654	13.3	1,369,108	68.0	10.9
Cafeterias	179	(38.1)	54,812	(2.6)	(0.5)
Other	1,281	(0.2)	414,142	57.1	9.5
EAST NORTH CENTRAL					
Illinois					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	5,945	(1.6)%	$2,340,689	45.4%	7.8%
Refreshment places	5,152	10.5	1,768,720	60.0	9.9
Cafeterias	188	(30.1)	65,438	6.0	1.2
Other	1,170	(3.9)	393,415	31.7	5.7
Indiana					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,705	1.4%	$912,029	55.4%	9.2%
Refreshment places	2,800	12.4	969,389	70.4	11.2
Cafeterias	214	(18.0)	101,527	56.9	9.4
Other	494	4.4	113,934	36.2	6.4
Michigan					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	4,507	(1.4)%	$1,746,595	45.7%	7.8%
Refreshment places	3,779	13.8	1,281,013	65.3	10.6
Cafeterias	129	(35.5)	54,776	(7.2)	(1.5)
Other	930	3.6	271,948	43.5	7.5
Ohio					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	4,928	(4.0)%	$1,971,958	50.2%	8.5%
Refreshment places	5,247	14.3	1,806,519	71.5	11.4
Cafeterias	222	(7.1)	97,650	38.9	6.8
Other	1,205	(6.2)	286,506	34.6	6.1

Chart continues . . .

Eating place sales by state and restaurant type (1977 and 1982)

Region	Number of establishments 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Sales (000) 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Average annual increase in sales
Wisconsin					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	3,356	5.0%	$1,059,422	55.8%	9.3%
Refreshment places	2,002	18.5	597,019	79.1	12.4
Cafeterias	63	3.3	17,232	66.7	10.8
Other	374	1.1	98,807	44.5	7.6
WEST NORTH CENTRAL					
Iowa					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,917	(3.4)%	$463,348	37.4%	6.6%
Refreshment places	1,465	10.3	404,921	72.8	11.6
Cafeterias	77	(24.5)	36,550	27.5	5.0
Other	281	22.2	48,873	61.1	10.0
Kansas					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,407	(5.7)%	$371,468	58.4%	9.6%
Refreshment places	1,418	8.6	433,532	72.6	11.5
Cafeterias	71	9.2	31,767	77.1	12.1
Other	205	20.6	45,665	34.7	6.1
Minnesota					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,386	1.5%	$925,919	60.8%	10.0%
Refreshment places	1,750	20.7	508,514	75.1	11.9
Cafeterias	63	(32.2)	15,954	20.7	3.8
Other	368	19.1	105,438	97.7	14.6
Missouri					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,546	(2.5)%	$832,753	49.3%	8.3%
Refreshment places	2,434	14.6	814,851	73.7	11.7
Cafeterias	198	(5.3)	76,362	28.6	5.2
Other	428	(1.6)	134,328	52.0	8.7
Nebraska					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,008	(2.4)%	$294,153	45.6%	7.8%
Refreshment places	819	24.8	233,845	78.4	12.3
Cafeterias	38	(20.8)	14,688	40.2	7.0
Other	124	(5.3)	25,310	36.2	6.4
*North Dakota**					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	445	(0.9)%	$125,986	51.0%	8.6%
Refreshment places	302	22.8	91,315	121.8	17.3
Cafeterias	15	(42.3)	4,415	N/A	N/A
Other	44	(8.3)	7,811	N/A	N/A
South Dakota					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	528	(12.4)%	$132,277	39.3%	6.9%
Refreshment places	343	22.1	75,624	89.9	13.7
Cafeterias	15	(21.0)	5,553	89.4	13.6
Other	55	1.8	9,313	39.3	6.9
SOUTH ATLANTIC					
*Delaware**					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	323	9.9%	$122,366	65.9%	10.7%
Refreshment places	282	13.7	100,879	80.7	12.6
Cafeterias	12	(45.4)	2,635	N/A	N/A
Other	56	(23.3)	15,281	N/A	N/A
District of Columbia					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	449	(3.4)%	$270,503	46.5%	7.9%
Refreshment places	327	4.5	127,650	62.2	10.2
Cafeterias	56	(16.4)	20,557	(4.4)	(1.0)
Other	132	9.1	100,247	55.2	9.2
Florida					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	5,942	21.0%	$2,791,096	90.1%	13.7%
Refreshment places	5,051	32.9	1,825,817	110.6	16.2
Cafeterias	312	(5.7)	218,896	70.0	11.2
Other	787	40.8	324,288	107.0	15.7
Georgia					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,272	6.1%	$821,887	77.0%	12.1%
Refreshment places	2,818	21.7	1,072,381	92.8	14.0
Cafeterias	186	(11.8)	93,776	41.2	7.2
Other	350	22.8	136,981	86.0	13.2
Maryland					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,698	4.6%	$790,801	67.8%	10.9%
Refreshment places	1,977	17.4	710,909	55.6	9.2
Cafeterias	70	(34.0)	44,644	12.1	2.3
Other	414	(15.2)	197,501	65.8	10.6

Chart continues . . .

Eating place sales by state and restaurant type (1977 and 1982)

Region	Number of establishments 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Sales (000) 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Average annual increase in sales
North Carolina					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,875	5.1%	$791,931	67.5%	10.9%
Refreshment places	2,845	20.6	1,055,191	107.2	15.7
Cafeterias	145	(19.9)	81,421	37.4	6.6
Other	362	5.8	109,522	58.6	9.7
South Carolina					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,398	9.0%	$392,522	73.2%	11.6%
Refreshment places	1,493	28.5	526,033	107.8	15.8
Cafeterias	92	17.9	49,237	119.6	17.0
Other	167	4.4	72,365	79.5	12.4
Virginia					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,717	0.8%	$912,987	73.4%	11.6%
Refreshment places	2,458	15.2	916,377	83.8	13.0
Cafeterias	209	(29.4)	73,046	26.9	4.9
Other	371	2.5	166,900	52.3	8.8
West Virginia					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	700	(11.7)%	$186,061	39.2%	6.8%
Refreshment places	784	22.5	263,849	94.5	14.2
Cafeterias	32	(36.0)	15,986	19.7	3.7
Other	133	(26.5)	28,611	19.6	3.7
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL					
Alabama					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,183	(13.3)%	$334,609	34.8%	6.1%
Refreshment places	1,658	13.1	582,548	91.3	13.9
Cafeterias	87	(34.1)	50,612	32.3	5.8
Other	216	(11.8)	68,414	26.0	4.7
Kentucky					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,323	(11.1)%	$416,106	43.8%	7.5%
Refreshment places	1,696	24.7	637,473	91.1	13.8
Cafeterias	111	(38.0)	39,502	26.8	4.9
Other	209	1.4	65,278	70.5	11.3
Mississippi					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	847	(4.7)%	$213,151	70.4%	11.3%
Refreshment places	1,006	16.4	302,408	76.2	12.0
Cafeterias	54	17.4	25,003	145.5	19.7
Other	135	11.6	34,418	6.7	1.3
Tennessee					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,968	(6.9)%	$682,084	60.8%	10.0%
Refreshment places	2,116	17.0	744,718	89.4	13.6
Cafeterias	159	(4.2)	73,605	64.3	10.4
Other	320	19.0	89,677	65.5	10.6
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL					
Arkansas					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	659	(13.4)%	$215,125	46.0%	7.9%
Refreshment places	1,182	15.1	335,653	92.1	13.9
Cafeterias	84	5.0	31,519	82.7	12.8
Other	115	(5.7)	22,809	35.2	6.2
Louisiana					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,633	2.1%	$636,993	81.2%	12.6%
Refreshment places	1,803	21.3	706,196	106.8	15.6
Cafeterias	85	(26.1)	70,228	46.2	7.9
Other	248	19.8	248,056	155.8	21.0
Oklahoma					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,579	(4.2)%	$516,922	90.5%	13.8%
Refreshment places	1,968	13.0	649,139	120.1	17.1
Cafeterias	139	0.7	79,056	86.6	13.3
Other	244	12.4	102,478	105.2	15.5
Texas					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	6,727	7.1%	$2,860,967	106.0%	15.6%
Refreshment places	8,534	21.1	2,898,421	106.9	15.7
Cafeterias	616	3.2	504,915	86.8	13.3
Other	968	17.6	464,576	116.9	16.7
MOUNTAIN					
Arizona					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,600	11.3%	$688,765	89.2%	13.6%
Refreshment places	1,464	37.0	452,769	108.9	15.9
Cafeterias	87	6.1	49,856	75.8	11.9
Other	228	25.3	84,298	28.0	5.0

Chart continues . . .

Eating place sales by state and restaurant type (1977 and 1982)

Region	Number of establishments 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Sales (000) 1982	Percent change 1977–1982	Average annual increase in sales
Colorado					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,296	11.3%	$957,301	95.5%	14.3%
Refreshment places	1,542	24.0	525,842	106.0	15.6
Cafeterias	116	(12.1)	64,342	78.4	12.3
Other	254	23.9	121,420	82.8	12.8
Idaho					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	597	3.5%	$175,718	45.1%	7.7%
Refreshment places	506	16.6	121,126	56.8	9.4
Cafeterias	26	23.8	7,589	85.6	13.2
Other	59	25.5	19,002	96.2	14.4
Montana					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	690	8.5%	$185,476	53.6%	9.0%
Refreshment places	496	21.6	109,971	80.0	12.5
Cafeterias	20	5.3	8,129	161.0	21.0
Others	47	2.2	9,473	62.8	10.2
Nevada					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	519	17.4%	$261,435	78.3%	12.3%
Refreshment places	474	43.6	159,596	103.3	15.2
Cafeterias	23	27.8	3,776	51.6	8.7
Other	69	68.3	49,057	307.8	32.0
New Mexico					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	827	9.7%	$272,270	84.0%	13.0%
Refreshment places	751	25.2	234,837	106.4	15.6
Cafeterias	34	(15.0)	32,957	80.4	12.5
Other	93	36.8	23,968	60.8	10.0
Utah					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	705	(11.5)%	$232,533	47.4%	8.1%
Refreshment places	699	9.4	213,464	81.0	12.6
Cafeterias	18	(40.0)	3,869	24.4	4.5
Other	91	28.2	28,178	138.0	18.9
Wyoming					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	358	10.8%	$122,474	76.7%	12.1%
Refreshment places	303	37.1	89,149	128.8	18.0
Cafeterias	6	(62.5)	1,825	(11.5)	(2.5)
Other	27	125.0	14,638	641.9	49.0
PACIFIC REGION					
Alaska					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	282	15.6%	$142,025	90.0%	13.7%
Refreshment places	217	41.8	102,724	116.5	16.7
Cafeterias	8	(57.9)	1,744	(47.0)	(12.0)
Other	36	(45.4)	81,415	25.1	4.6
California					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	15,207	9.1%	$7,164,561	67.4%	10.9%
Refreshment places	13,244	22.6	4,341,897	85.9	13.2
Cafeterias	727	(4.3)	254,579	48.7	8.3
Other	1,878	19.0	763,102	115.5	16.6
Hawaii					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	773	21.7%	$466,188	86.1%	13.3%
Refreshment places	545	21.6	262,001	89.7	13.7
Cafeterias	26	(7.1)	9,588	69.8	11.1
Other	97	16.9	71,738	109.7	16.0
Oregon					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	1,868	6.6%	$671,721	50.1%	8.5%
Refreshment places	1,498	30.1	429,242	76.1	12.0
Cafeterias	94	5.6	33,082	78.3	12.3
Other	193	13.5	60,419	88.9	13.6
Washington					
Restaurants & lunchrooms	2,752	14.0%	$1,189,218	61.7%	10.1%
Refreshment places	2,098	36.0	667,363	91.4	13.9
Cafeterias	112	(11.8)	35,747	17.0	3.2
Other	246	20.6	128,656	129.2	18.1

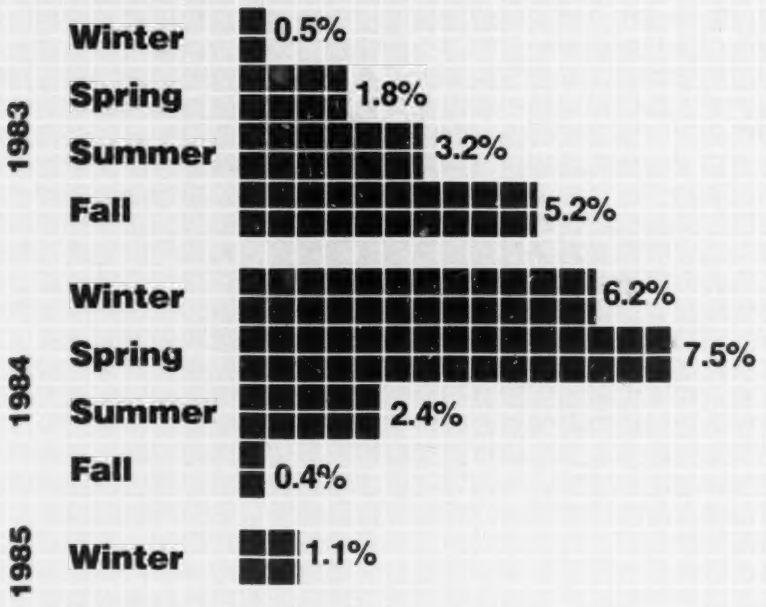
**The sales data for cafeterias and other establishments was not reported for Delaware and North Dakota in 1977 in order to avoid disclosing data for individual companies.*

Source: *1982 Census of Retail Trade*, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

December-January-February

CREST REPORT

Percent change in quarterly traffic
(winter 1983—winter 1985)



Note: **Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.**
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Winter quarter highlights

- **Customer traffic:** Up 1.1 percent
- **Sales:** Advanced 4.7 percent
- **Visit frequency:** Increased 3.0 percent
- **Average check size:** Up 3.6 percent
- **Restaurant types:**
  Quick service customer traffic: Rose 3.7 percent
  Upscale customer traffic: Edged up 0.7 percent
  Midscale customer traffic: Declined 4.1 percent
- **Meal periods:**
  Breakfast customer traffic: Jumped 14.2 percent
  Lunch customer traffic: Dipped 0.8 percent
  Dinner customer traffic: Dropped 1.8 percent

Customer traffic climbs 1.1 percent . . .

Customer traffic at the nation's restaurants rose a modest 1.1 percent during the December-January-February quarter, marking the 10th consecutive quarter of growth, according to CREST's *Household Report*. This advance is an improvement over the fall quarter's 0.4 percent gain. However, it is lower than the 2.4 percent increase recorded this past summer and considerably below the 7.5 percent advance last spring.

More moderate economic growth and harsh winter weather contributed to the relatively small gain in customer counts during this quarter. Real GNP rose a sluggish 1.3 percent in the first quarter of 1985, compared with a 4.3 percent increase in the fourth quarter of 1984. In addition, total retail sales moderated over the three-month period. After posting gains of 5.1 percent and 6.5 percent, respectively in December and January, sales advanced a considerably slower 2.6 percent in February.

The unemployment rate also remained relatively high during the winter period. In December, thanks to increased hiring for Christmas, the unemployment rate leveled off at 7.2 percent. However, in January, when many of the seasonal employees were let go, the rate edged up to 7.4 percent, while in February the unemployment rate dipped slightly to 7.3 percent.

Weather dampens sales . . .

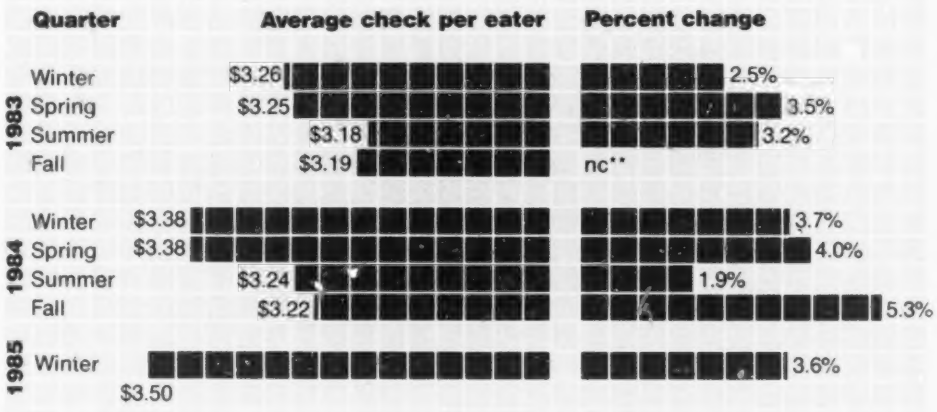
Additionally, Mother Nature played a role in dampening customer counts at restaurants. The weather was very severe, and many consumers opted to remain at home. Also, many industrial plants were forced to shut down as a result of the weather, putting hundreds of people out of work. This led to a slowdown in personal income growth. Personal income rose 0.3 percent in February versus larger advances of 0.6 percent in January and 0.4 percent in December.

On the other hand, several indicators painted a somewhat brighter picture. Despite the economy's slower rate of growth, consumer confidence remained strong during the winter quarter. The index dropped

somewhat in December but rebounded to higher levels in January and February. Additionally, inflation rose at a moderate pace during the December-January-February period—up an average 3.7 percent. This is well below the 4.1 percent advance posted in the fall quarter.

NRA is optimistic that the restaurant industry will grow at a healthy pace in 1985. Real eating place sales (adjusted for inflation) are expected to increase 3.7 percent in 1985. The spring and summer months should be especially strong due to moderately rising inflation and increased vacation travel.

Percent change in per person check*
(winter 1983—winter 1985)



* Based on average for two-week period
** No change

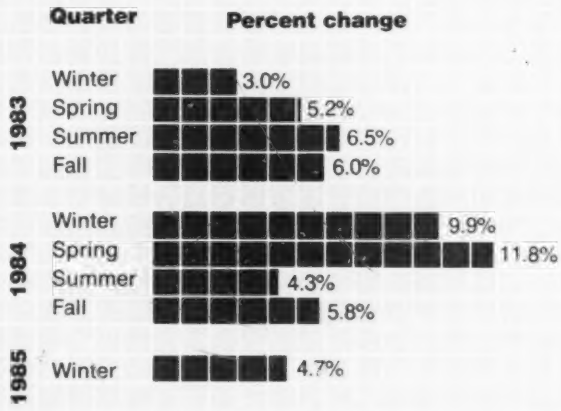
Note: Percent change is from the same period in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Households dine out more often . . .

Households dined out more often in the winter quarter. The average number of times families and singles visited restaurants—visit frequency—rose 3.0 percent. This is considerably higher than the 0.9 percent advance recorded in the fall quarter and slightly above the 2.6 percent advance in the summer period. On the other hand, the number of households that dined out at least once in the winter quarter was down 1.6 percent from the same quarter one year ago.

An analysis of visit frequency by industry segments—quick service, midscale and upscale—reveals that quick service restaurants posted the largest gain—3.4 percent. Upscale restaurants also recorded a somewhat smaller 1.0 percent increase, while midscale restaurants experienced a slight decline in visit frequency—1.4 percent. However, only in the quick service segment did the actual number of families and singles dining out at least once in the two-week period—restaurant penetration—increase, up 8.1 percent.

Percent change in quarterly CREST sales*
(winter 1983—winter 1985)



* Sales based on total U.S. average for two-week period each quarter.

Note: Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Breakfast traffic jumps 14.2 percent . . .

Breakfast was the only major meal period in which traffic increased during the winter quarter, rising a substantial 14.2 percent versus one year earlier. Customer counts at lunch fell a slight 0.8 percent, while dinner traffic declined 1.8 percent.

The increase in breakfast traffic is significantly larger than the 6.5 percent and 9.6 percent advances recorded in the fall and summer quarters, respectively. The decline in lunch and dinner traffic may reflect the particularly harsh winter weather as well as the relatively high rate of unemployment.

Restaurant sales up 4.7 percent . . .

CREST sales rose a moderate 4.7 percent during the December-January-February period, somewhat below the 5.8 percent advance registered in the fall quarter. This gain is slightly higher than last summer quarter's 4.3 percent increase in sales but significantly below the 11.8 percent gain recorded in the 1984 spring quarter.

The average expenditure for a restaurant meal or snack—per person check size—climbed 3.6 percent in the winter quarter. This approximates the 4.0 percent gain recorded by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food-away-from-home during the December-January-February period. Last fall the average check rose a more substantial 5.3 percent. On the other hand, the winter quarter advance is larger than the 1.9 percent increase posted in the summer quarter of 1984.

Breakfast highlights:

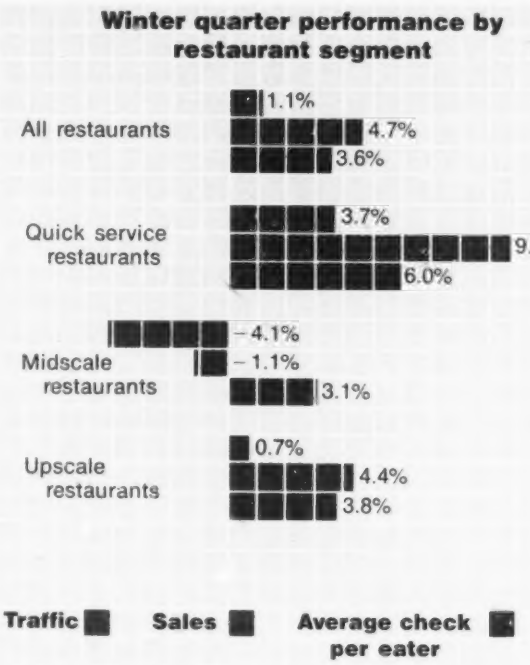
- Sales for the morning meal rose an impressive 13.4 percent.
- The average check averaged $2.18 per person—a 0.4 percent decline.
- Visit frequency increased 4.0 percent, and penetration advanced 8.1 percent.

Lunch highlights:

- Lunch sales went up a modest 2.9 percent.
- The per person check averaged $3.12, up 3.6 percent.
- The average number of times households ate lunch out fell 0.4 percent, and penetration declined 1.0 percent.

Dinner highlights:

- Dinner sales advanced a moderate 3.0 percent.
- The average per person check climbed 5.1 percent to $4.72 per person.
- Visit frequency rose 1.7 percent, but penetration declined 1.5 percent.



Note: Percent change from the same quarter in prior year.
Source: CREST *Household Report*, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

Traffic up at quick service and upscale restaurants . . .

Quick service restaurants posted a 3.7 percent gain in customer traffic during the December-January-February period, outpacing the other industry segments. Traffic at upscale establishments edged up a slight 0.7 percent. Customer counts at midscale restaurants, however, fell 4.1 percent in the winter quarter.

Ethnic restaurants continued to make impressive gains in customer traffic, especially in the quick service and upscale segments. Customer counts at upscale steak and specialty restaurants and midscale sandwich establishments also made strong showings.

Quick service restaurant highlights:

- Sales at quick service establishments climbed a hefty 9.7 percent. The increase in customer counts together with a larger than average gain in the per person check helped boost sales.
- The number of occasions on which promotions were used dropped from 16.4 percent last winter to 13.7 percent in the winter of 1985.
- Traffic at quick service specialty restaurants grew at the fastest pace—up 7.6 percent. Significant advances in customer traffic at pizza and barbecue restaurants helped fuel this increase.
- Customer counts at quick service ethnic restaurants rose a strong 7.4 percent, with both Mexican and Oriental establishments making significant gains.
- Sandwich/varied menu restaurants experienced a 1.9 percent increase in traffic.

Upscale restaurant segment highlights:

- Upscale restaurant sales increased 4.4 percent.
- Promotional usage at upscale restaurants declined from 9.5 percent to 8.8 percent of occasions.
- Upscale specialty restaurants recorded an 11.7 percent advance in customer traffic, outdistancing the other categories. Upscale steak establishments stole the show with a 19.4 percent increase in traffic.
- Customer counts at upscale ethnic restaurants rose an impressive 9.2 percent. Oriental restaurants registered the largest gain, followed by Mexican establishments.
- Upscale hotel restaurants, on the other hand, experienced an 18 percent drop in customer traffic.

Midscale restaurant highlights:

- Midscale restaurant sales fell 1.1 percent.
- The number of occasions on which promotions were used fell from 9.4 percent last winter to 8.8 percent in the winter of 1985.
- Midscale ethnic restaurants posted the best performance in this segment. Customer traffic rose 1.3 percent, with Italian and Mexican restaurants making the strongest showings.
- Customer counts at midscale specialty restaurants declined 3.3 percent. A drop in traffic at fish/seafood, family steak and other restaurants contributed to the decline.
- Midscale hotel/retail establishments suffered the largest decline in traffic—down 10.1 percent.

What is CREST?

Launched in September 1975, the CREST (Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends) survey is designed to track expenditures and behavior in the commercial segment of the foodservice industry, including information by type and classification of restaurant and also by meal or snack period.

Approximately 10,000 families and 2,800 non-family households, representing demographic patterns in the U.S., have been selected to participate in the study. Each household is asked to record every meal and snack experience during a particular two-week period for each of the four quarters of the year. Detailed entries are required for meals eaten or purchased away from home in establishments, such as restaurants, hotels and motels, fast food/drive-ins, delicatessens, refreshment stands, carryouts, coffee shops, donut shops, ice cream shops or eating places inside variety stores or other retail stores. The diary does not include any meals eaten at schools, hospitals, colleges or other institutional feeding places.

CREST information can help restaurateurs compare their operation's performance with that of the total industry as well as with specific restaurant categories (quick service, midscale or upscale restaurants).

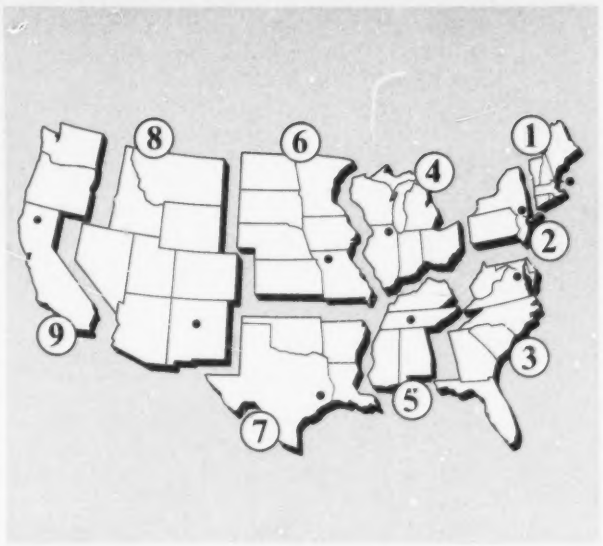
The CREST study can also provide valuable information concerning customer behavior, such as how much people spend, where they spend and when they spend. And, because it is an ongoing study, CREST information allows comparison against a standard—an aid in the development of trend analysis.

Readers wishing more information on the CREST study should contact GDR/CREST Enterprises, one of the NPD group of marketing and research companies, 1300 W. Higgins Rd., Park Ridge, IL 60068-5798.

How's business?

by Cecelia Niepold

This month's interviews spotlight the variety of Mexican restaurants that operate across the country.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Salem, NH
NRA members: Sally and Rito Acevedo
Operation: Little Mexico
Profile: Two Mexican restaurants
In business: 15 years
Seats: 100 and 230
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Teaching New Englanders to enjoy Mexican food hasn't been easy for **Sally** and **Rito Acevedo,** owners of Little Mexico, Inc. "We learned right away that some people were hesitant about trying Mexican food because of its hot and spicy reputation," explains Sally Acevedo. To make customers more comfortable, Acevedo included descriptions of the entrees on the menu, made sure staff could thoroughly discuss the dishes and encouraged customers to season meals to their own taste by providing hot sauces at the table.

Building on their Mexican background, the Acevedos have developed their menu by translating basic Mexican recipes into their own style.

The Acevedos' methods for reforming Northerners' palates seem to be working. They've just opened a second establishment, which is twice as large as their first.

2 MIDDLE ATLANTIC

Location: New York, NY
NRA member: Carlos Jacott
Operation: El Parador
Profile: Fullservice Mexican restaurant
In business: 26 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Although competition in the Mexican restaurant segment has intensified in New York City, business is still thriving at El Parador. **Carlos Jacott,** the owner, believes his business has continued to grow because he thoroughly spoils his customers and makes each dining experience a festive occasion.

One personalized touch is to treat children to a "behind the scenes" tour of the kitchen. Children meet the chef and receive a special basket of tortilla chips.

The menu is varied, and items range from jalapenos stuffed with peanut butter to Chicken Parador, the restaurant's signature dish.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Washington, DC
NRA member: Manny Pena
Operation: La Fonda Mexican Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice Mexican restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 300
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business has picked up with the return of the warm weather and the tourists, says **Manny Pena,** co-owner of La Fonda Mexican Restaurant. Pena has noticed that the trend toward eating ethnic food has also boosted business.

Located in a bustling residential neighborhood, La Fonda had trouble attracting lunch business because parking was difficult. To solve the problem, they started a van service with the restaurant next door to make transportation easy for customers. The service is generating additional business.

Four years ago, to celebrate Mexican Independence Day (September 15), Pena decided to close off the street in front of the restaurant and organize a block party. The party has become an annual event. Last year 30,000 people enjoyed the good food and entertainment, which included mariachi bands and Latin dancers. It's also become a neighborhood project. The local merchant's association is involved, and many of the restaurants in the area participate.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Chicago, IL
NRA member: Philip Marienthal
Operation: Blue Mesa
Profile: Southwestern restaurant
In business: 18 months
Seats: 90 inside, 60 on patio
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business is going really well, says **Philip Marienthal,** owner/operator of Blue Mesa. Blue Mesa serves food with a Southwestern flavor, but the influence is from New Mexico, not Mexico. "The main difference is in the spices and chiles we use." For instance, he serves blue corn tortillas and sauces made with green chiles—both indigenous to the New Mexico area.

A special touch is the basket of sopaipillas (Indian refried bread) served with all meals. The traditional bread is cut into small triangles and served with honey. "The honey helps cool the palate," says Marienthal.

American dishes are available, but most have a Southwestern flair, such as steak topped with cactus, onions and peppers.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Brentwood, TN
NRA member: Jerry Hargett

Operation: Fiesta Cantina, Inc.
Profile: 13-unit Mexican restaurant chain
In business: 8 years
Seats: 100, average
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Sales have shot up almost 35 percent, according to **Jerry Hargett,** director of operations at Fiesta Cantina, Inc.—a mid-price Mexican restaurant chain.

Hargett attributes the strong growth to the company's quality-conscious advertising and the variety of specials and menu items offered. For instance, the restaurants have specialty nights, such as an "all you can eat" tacos feature. "These specials encourage people to try new items," explains Hargett.

The company also has recently developed an appetizer bar, which features tortilla chips and such condiments as hot and mild salsas and green chile sauce. Customers have fun combining different flavors to their own taste. Another new item is the Paco Taco, which is pita bread stuffed like a taco.

Although units are primarily located in the Southeast, the company also operates restaurants in New York and Nebraska. The menu is fairly standard at all locations, but there are some differences in spice levels to accommodate regional preferences. For instance, the hot sauce in New York is blander than that served in Tennessee.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Trenton, MO
NRA member: Larry Gift
Operation: Judge Roy Bean's Mexican Restaurant
Profile: Mexican restaurant
In business: 18 months
Seats: 120
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is up," says **Larry Gift,** owner of Judge Roy Bean's Mexican Restaurant in Trenton, MO—a small agricultural town. "We're the only Mexican restaurant in town, and it's taken a little time to build the trade," he explains.

To help people get accustomed to Mexican entrees, Gift has included explanations as well as pronounciation tips on the menu. Customers can also watch the food being prepared in the open kitchen. Service is a combination of self-serve and table service. A drive-thru window encourages take out orders.

The menu includes basic Mexican entrees as well as unusual desserts, such as rollitos—flour tortillos filled with apples, raisins, walnuts and cream cheese that are deep fried and topped with cinnamon and sugar.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Houston, TX
NRA member: Rosemary Garbett
Operation: Los Tios Mexican Restaurants, Inc.
Profile: 7-unit Mexican restaurant chain
In business: 15 years
Seats: 250, average
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business in Houston is still a little slow, but a lot of new restaurants are opening up, says **Rosemary Garbett,** owner of Los Tios Mexican Restaurants, Inc.

Garbett's restaurants serve primarily Tex-Mex food—a traditional favorite in the area. Garbett believes most customers enjoy the milder Mexican food that typifies Tex-Mex. "My restaurants are strictly Tex-Mex. We don't have the greasy, hot, spicy foods that are really native," she explains. The price/value offered at her restaurants also makes them attractive to customers. "Tex-Mex is generally low in price; families can eat out very inexpensively and still be served," she says.

Recent new items include charbroiled marinated chicken breasts and fajitas. "Fajitas are a really hot item right now; everyone's adding them to menus," she maintains. Garbett's fajitas are charbroiled skirt steaks, wrapped in flour tortillas and served with beans, rice, pico de gallo (relish made of tomatoes, onions and cilantro), charbroiled onions and bell peppers.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Albuquerque, NM
NRA member: Robert Montoya
Operation: Cocino de Carlos
Profile: Fullservice Mexican restaurant
In business: 34 years
Seats: 175
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business is up and the local economy is strong, says **Robert Montoya,** owner of Cocino de Carlos. Recent design changes to update the restaurant's look and a new fullservice liquor license have contributed to the establishment's sales.

Entrees have a distinct New Mexican taste. "New Mexico has its own type of Mexican food. There's definitely a different flavor here in Albuquerque," says Montoya. For instance, New Mexican chili has its own personality—made with green chiles, a favorite local product that gives the chili a special flavor. "You can really taste the chile peppers in our chili," explains Montoya. "Other people put in a lot of other things to thin it and cool it down."

Montoya has noticed that customers are really looking for different items to try. Seafood enchiladas and fajitas are two recent additions that have become very popular. Montoya has also added salads with a Mexican accent, including chicken, taco and seafood, to appeal to the growing number of nutrition-conscious patrons.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Selma, CA
NRA member: Lionel Gonzalez-Rodriquez
Operation: El Conquistador Restaurant
Profile: Three Mexican restaurants
In business: 12 years
Seats: 120
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is good; sales are up," says **Lionel Gonzalez-Rodriquez,** owner of El Conquistador Restaurants—a three-unit chain of Mexican restaurants located in central California.

Mexican food is very popular in California, partly because of the area's close proximity to Mexico. "Everyone eats Mexican food here. Some people eat it every day," maintains Gonzalez-Rodriquez. He is proud of the area's Mexican flavor. "Ours is the best Mexican food in the country," he says proudly.

Personal service and menu variety help differentiate El Conquistador Restaurants from the numerous Mexican establishments in the area. For instance, the menu offers 20 different tostadas, ranging from basic bean and beef dishes to unusual shrimp and crabmeat combinations.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Aiding the search for missing children

The "early bird" menu at Old Fisherman's Grotto Restaurant in Monterey, CA, lists such specials as Trout Almadine, Fish 'n' Chips and Seafood Pasta. But turn the menu over and you'll find a listing of a different sort—up to six names of missing children, complete with photographs, dates of birth and dates of abduction.

"I saw the photos of missing children printed on milk cartons, and it brought tears to my eyes," says restaurant owner Chris Shake. "So I contacted the Action Alliance for Children in Berkeley to see how I could help."

Shake began printing missing children's photographs on his menus over two months ago. He estimates that up to 800 patrons have seen the photos daily since then. "No children have been found as a result of our menus—yet," he says. "But we are increasing public awareness of the problem."

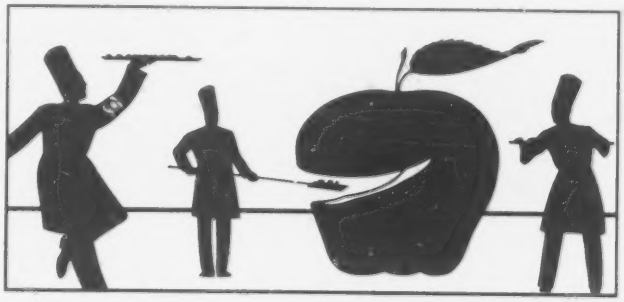
*—**NRA NEWS** interview*

Georgia fast food appeals to northern students

Question: What's an advertisement for a fast food restaurant in Cartersville, GA, doing in a student newspaper in Indianapolis, IN? *Answer:* The operators of the McDonald's restaurant located near a major interstate highway in Cartersville know that, come spring, students from Purdue University in Indianapolis will head south for that annual ritual called spring break.

"Every year at this time, I-75 is filled with college kids headed down to Florida," explains McDonald's first assistant Liz Orton, "so we figured the best way to reach them is by advertising in their school papers." Orton says the restaurant advertises in major university newspapers throughout the northern states, offering students two sandwiches for the price of one.

*—**NRA NEWS** interview*



Channeling food to the needy

If you're looking for a way to demonstrate community support through charitable contributions, you might consider contacting Second Harvest. Second Harvest is a nonprofit organization that solicits food from food manufacturers, retailers and others and distributes these donations to its nationwide network of food banks. This food is then distributed to community organizations that feed the needy.

The advantages to participation in Second Harvest are three-fold: first, participation demonstrates responsibility to community welfare. Second, donors need to deal with only one convenient source to move surplus food—there are Second Harvest locations in most major cities, and representatives will pick up donations. And, finally, donors receive the benefits of federal and state tax deductions.

For more information on how you can become involved, contact: Second Harvest, 343 South Dearborn St., Suite 516, Chicago, IL 60604, (312) 341-1303.

*—**NRA NEWS** interview*

California cuisine imported for New York fund raiser

Two renowned New York City caterers recently joined forces to bring the "Spirit of L.A." to the Big Apple. Great Performances and Cuisine Americaine, the catering companies, coordinated a gala fund raiser for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, bringing chefs from six prestigious Los Angeles restaurants to prepare their hors d'oeuvres specialties. The two caterers also prepared a sit-down dinner for the 650 attendees.

"The California theme was a delightful way to celebrate spring in New York City," reports Liz Neumark, co-owner of Great Performances. Says Rick Rodgers of Cuisine Americaine, "The guests were enthralled by some of the 'California trendy' items served, such as blue corn tortillas. That's quite a departure from lox and bagels." The fund raiser, sponsored by Abraham and Strauss department stores, netted more than $150,000 for the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

*—**NRA NEWS** interview*

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